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ABSTRACT

Organizational hostility plagued the entire 1972-1978 Experimental Schools (ES) program in Constantine, Michigan, and ultimately resulted in its failure. Constantine had a history of conflict between those residents advocating local control and those, mainly newcomers, advocating external intrusions into the community. When the ES program began, teachers were attempting to assert their professionalism, rural values were less esteemed, and external influences were being felt in the town. The ES program was intended to leave the basic educational organization intact but to modify the curriculum and teaching methodology by instituting individualization and humanization (egalitarianism). The plan was severely affected by the eruption of a week-long teachers' strike at the beginning of the implementation year. The strike resulted in social and civic repercussions, a change in school functioning, and an altered balance of power. Teachers, unified against an administration that would not yield them any control and threatened by lessened classroom control, did not entirely support the ES plan. Residents, never really included in the plan, felt it was unimportant and resoundingly defeated a tax increase to continue it. At the end of the five years, authoritarian relationships remained, student attitudes and achievement had not improved, and career preparation was unchanged. (SB)

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Continuity and Change in Rural Schooling: Constantine, Michigan

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William L. Donnelly

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN RURAL SCHOOLING:

CONSTANTINE, MICHIGAN

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May 1979

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PREFACE

This study was conducted as part of a large multi-year research project funded by the National Institute of Education through a contract with Abt Associates Inc. of Cambridge, Massachusetts, an applied social research firm. The Experimental Schools Program for Small Schools Serving Rural Areas called for a series of reports documenting what happened in each of ten school systems during the funding period. From January 1973 through August 1976 Abt Associates employed me as its resident "on-site researcher" in Constantine, Michigan. The research on which this volume is based was conducted as part of that research effort.

This volume is dedicated to the residents, pupils and school staff of Constantine, Michigan without whom it would have been impossible to conduct the research. Although I have chosen not to identify individuals by name in this study, a special note of recognition is due to those who made substantial contributions, have much time to answer my questions, and indeed, provided many of the insights on which this report is based.

I was fortunate to have the guidance and friendship of Robert E. Herriott, who as Abt Associates' project director provided a unique blend of leadership and scholarly collegiality in supporting my field work and writing. Recognition is due also to Stephen Fitzsimmons, Michael Kane, Andrea Kovacs, and Peter Miller of Abt Associates for their cooperative spirit in the management of a large and complex research project. Harry F. Wolcott, at the University of Oregon, provided important insights and encouragement. Howard S. Becker, Neal Gross, Robert Nakamura, Ray Rist, Jonathan Sher, David Westby, and Donald Willower read earlier drafts and

provided many helpful suggestions.

Finally, I was fortunate to have the companionship and support of Linda Bescher-Donnelly during our three and one half years in Constantine. Linda lent her enthusiasm when mine wavered and offered critical judgment when needed. Her professional skills as a sociologist complemented my own and surely some of my conclusions are the product of our discussions together.

Nonetheless, this report is the result of my efforts, and in the end, I bear responsibility for its contents.

Eugene, Oregon
April 1979

William L. Donnelly

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CHAPTER ONE.

CONFRONTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE: OPPORTUNITY AND RISK

In 1970 the United States Office of Education inaugurated its Experimental Schools program to provide grants to selected school districts interested in introducing locally conceived plans for "comprehensive educational change." The grants were to be for a five-year period and were to be large enough to comprise a significant (ten to fifteen percent) portion of the school district's annual budget. In the late 1960s there were concerns that federal assistance to education lacked coherence, stifled local initiative, and was not adequately researched. Through a focus on comprehensiveness, local design, and extensive research, the program was intended to overcome these shortcoming. Between December 1970 and June 1972, three separate competitions were held to select eight urban and ten rural school districts.

The Constantine Public Schools, located in southwestern Michigan, was one of the ten rural districts selected. In June 1972, the school district received a grant from the federal government to develop a four year plan to implement comprehensive change in its school program, a plan to be implemented during the next four years with ample funding supplied by the National Institute of Education.[1] Planning for change is more easily accomplished than actually putting such a plan into operation, however. During those four years, the project was undermined by dissension between administrators and teachers, a strike by teachers, lack of commitment to the planned goals, inadequate leadership and lack of community participation and support. Many components of the plan were abandoned and the final defeat

came at the end of the final year in a decisive rejection by the voters of a tax increase which would have provided local funds following cessation of the federal funding.

Too often planned educational change begins with high expectations and ends without achieving intended goals. Any study of planned change must consider a broad array of interacting elements which can impinge upon and influence change efforts and the resulting intentional and unplanned consequences. There is evidence that many, perhaps most, change efforts do not attain their stated project objectives (for example, Gross et al., 1971; Charters and Pellegrin, 1972; Pincus, 1974; Nelson and Sieber, 1976; Wolcott, 1977; and Herriott and Gross, 1979). Frequently, failure is attributed to poor leadership, resistance to change by various groups, and other processes involving lack of cooperation among organization units (Gross, 1979).

Most research has looked at innovation by isolating it from the remainder of the school system, or the community, thereby ignoring the historical circumstances and current contextual factors which have shaped the school and community. Some recent research on organizational legitimacy (Dowling and Pfeffer, 1975; and Hannigan and Kueneman, 1977) has offered new direction, however. It is the thesis of this volume that to understand change within the school requires examination of the historical and contemporary conditions of the community, as well as the organizational climate of the schools in which the innovations are to be enacted.

This volume presents an analysis of the events in Constantine from a sociological standpoint. The problems of change in modern society--ubiquitous at all levels--have always provided an empirical touchstone for

the formulation of sociological axioms. In this study, the problem with change in the educational system of the rural community, or, more properly put, its failure to change, is analyzed from a perspective which examines the mechanisms by which internal and external conditions of the organization are translated into institutional change and concurrently changes in the distributions of status and rewards. Organizational change and conflict are treated as normal occurrences in the organization, shaped by the historical and community contextual conditions which influence daily operation of the school system.

OVERVIEW OF THIS VOLUME

The remainder of Chapter 1 examines the issues which are pertinent to planned education change efforts, in general, and to the introduction of a specific program of change to the Constantine schools and community. The discussion describes the objectives of the project and its successful formal planning process.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4, focused on the processes of change in the school district and community up to the time of its participation in this federally-stimulated planned change effort. Chapter 2 looks at the changing community and local efforts to resist change and preserve a comfortable image of community life. Chapter 3 examines local control of the schools and of the efforts by some to preserve local influence in this important community institution. Chapter 4 describes changes in the balance of power within the school system and explores a teachers' strike which signified the most drastic shift in that balance.

The remainder of the volume presents a discussion of the dilemma produced when planned educational change is disrupted by unplanned events, resulting in unexpected outcomes. Chapter 5 examines the efforts of school district personnel to implement the planned changes within a climate of continuous organizational conflict. Efforts by one group were countered or ignored by others. The result was four years of make-shift efforts which produced a cobbled and frequently revised project. Chapter 6 discusses the conflicting educational ideologies which influenced the organizational conflict and the tangled changes introduced under the guise of the Experimental Schools project. Chapter 7 provides a summary and conclusions, with a discussion of the potential for planned change which existed in the school district.

The intent of this volume is to describe how a planned change effort failed to succeed, at least in part, because organizational conflict within the schools predominated and components of the project became tools used by various interest groups to pursue group objectives. The primary concern with group interest undermined planned efforts to produce unified and systematic change.

The Experimental Schools program was intended to produce "comprehensive" change through the entire school system involving school staff, students, and community residents. The five years of funding (June 1972 to June 1978) was introduced to the schools and community during a time when the schools had experienced growth problems produced through annexation and immigration. At the same time, the teachers had become increasingly concerned with achieving professional recognition and autonomy from the traditional authority of school board and administrators. The conflict

of interests within the school organization was predominant and disrupted efforts to achieve the innovations planned with the federal funds.

The innovations were planned to improve student attitudes, achievement, and career planning through five tactics to "humanize" and "individualize" the learning process. Efforts were made to modify and expand the curriculum, improve guidance counseling, provide individualized instruction, and change from authoritarian to egalitarian relationships. Most planned changes were not successful, however, and were displaced by other change objectives as administrators, school board, and teachers struggled to establish a new balance of power.

Like other organizations, the school is the arena for on-going conflicts of interest among its several membership groups. The effort to maintain customary routines and traditional modes of authority was continually challenged by external ideals of educational improvement and demands by teachers for greater participation in the management of problems in the learning environment. The competition between two contrasted models of authority produced an environment in which change occurred and was exemplified by conflicting ideologies. Those who sought to maintain the status quo demanded local control of the schools while most teachers sought to produce a more cosmopolitan view emphasizing national educational values and recognition of themselves as professionals.

The resulting conflict generated open hostilities which led to one teacher strike and another instance of protracted and angry contract negotiations. Combined with frequent rejections of administrative authority, the conflict produce resistance to the innovation process and rejection of many innovations. Goal displacement occurred wherein the original objectives of the project were replaced by other objectives repeatedly

proposed by teachers and administrators. By the end of the project, most teachers, administrators, school board members, and residents had concluded that planned educational change in Constantine had not been successful and that organizational conflict had been the principal reason for that failure.

ESTABLISHING THE RURAL ES PROGRAM

Each rural project was to be unique, based on local definitions of what was best suited to the peculiar needs of the district, with little direction and control from the federal agency, although the districts were to be strictly accountable for their use of the funds. Three stages were planned for each project: a selection period in the spring of 1972; a one-year planning period, 1972-73; and a four-year implementation period, 1973-77.

The Selection Period

In March 1972, the United States Office of Education announced the program to all school districts with fewer than 2,500 students. Interested districts were requested to submit a letter of interest describing the ability of the school system to carry out a project of educational change. Letters were submitted by 320 districts; each was evaluated at the Office of Education, and by five regional panels of experts in the field of education. Six districts, including Constantine, were selected and awarded one-year grants to plan for four more years, with the promise of a commitment from the agency that long term funding would follow. Six additional districts were also funded for one year but without the commitment for additional funding years. Eventually, four of the second six districts

received additional funding for four more years.

The Planning Period

During the planning period, the administration of the program was transferred to the newly created National Institute of Education and project officers, employed by that agency, were assigned to each of the rural districts to assist in starting the projects. A formal project plan was required from each district during this planning year. It was to state project goals, provide details of the changes, and identify procedures. A draft of the plan document was to be submitted to the National Institute of Education by December 1972, while contract signing for the second, third, fourth and fifth years was planned for late spring 1973. During the planning year, the research contractor, Abt Associates Inc. contacted each of the ten districts. Beginning in January 1973 researchers employed by Abt Associates were assigned to live and work in the districts for a period of three and on-half years.

The Implementation Period

After the formal project plan had been accepted by the National Institute of Education it was incorporated as a statement of the "scope of work" to be accomplished by the district during this period. Each district established a timetable for implementation of the various project components. The budgetted funding for the four years decreased each year so that by the end of the project, little federal funding would be provided, in anticipation of absorption of the continuing costs by the school district. The major capital expenditures were made during the first three

years, with the funding for the fourth year primarily for maintenance costs. The intent was that each district would continue elements of its project with local funding after the cessation of the federal funding. The districts were also required to provide a series of quarterly reports on progress to the National Institute of Education and to permit the documentation and evaluation of their projects by Abt Associates.

Program Difficulties

The transfer of the program from the National Institute of Education signaled the beginning of several difficulties as struggles erupted (between sponsors within Congress, the Office of Education, several citizen gorups and within the executive branch) over the nature of the program and of the agency itself. Confusion continued for much of the program's life over whether it was primarily a general aid grant to school districts, a research project, or a demonstration. The tenuous existence of the National Institute of Education and the program during these first years was disconcerting to the staff assigned to monitor the projects, and it was disturbing to the project leadership in the rural districts. During the five years of the program the agency experienced threats of termination of funding and staff turnover. Nearly all agency staff who had worked with the districts in the fall of 1973 did not remain until the cessation of funding in June 1977.

BRINGING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE TO A RURAL COMMUNITY

The Constantine school district is in a rural area characterized by conservative beliefs and values; where many believe that education should

consist of the basics--"the three R's" and not much more. Thus, it's not surprising that the Constantine plan left the educational organization basically intact while making modifications and additions primarily in the areas of the curriculum and teaching methods. The planners hoped to alleviate any fears that federal funding would introduce "frills" to the schools, or worse, ideas and values considered contrary to the predominant value system. Thus, no effort was made to introduce sex education as part of the plan, although there existed no systematic sex education in the school district. Several years earlier, a group of residents had attempted to gather support for introducing sex education in the schools. Their efforts were unsuccessful as members of a local chapter of the John Birch Society and others convinced the school administrators and school board that this community was not willing to permit the schools to teach a subject which they believed should be reserved to the family.

In spite of explicit demonstrations like those associated with the attempt to introduce sex education, school personnel believed most residents were willing to accept changes which did not drastically deviate from the existing program. Therefore, they developed a plan which specified modifications to the existing curriculum and teaching methods; all to be implemented with a concern for continuity in the existing structure of learning. Because the schools were the most important institution in Constantine, it was hoped that most residents would be willing to accept innovations which could be viewed as improvements without causing alteration to the existing value system in the community. Individualized instruction in reading and math were acceptable, but the open classrooms concept was rejected as too radical. Adding career education was acceptable,

but not sex education. Thus the plan for Constantine maintained a concern for continuity as well as change.

First notification of the program came to Constantine in a letter from the U.S. Office of Education. It was received by the superintendent in March, 1972, several days before the week-long spring break. The superintendent notified the three principals and a high school science teacher, the latter having had previous experience in applying for a federal grant for an "outdoor laboratory." This group worked during spring break gathering information and writing an application which was forwarded to the federal agency.

The 15-page application described the school district, its location, facilities, size, and staffing. It described various programs and strengths of the district as well as many perceived problems. In writing this initial proposal, only a small group of staff members were informed and involved--a fact which later haunted the project when teachers complained that they were not involved in the decision to apply. The superintendent claimed that the application deadline limited the potential for broader involvement in this initial planning phase.

After award of the planning grant in June 1972 one year was allowed to develop a formal project plan. Beginning with the opening of school in September 1972, administrators, teachers, school board members, pupils and residents were involved in developing and writing that plan. Most of the $99,000 planning grant was used for salaries of the project leaders, teachers, and for consultant fees. The planning year ended successfully on June 23, 1973, with the award of a contract for the second, third, and fourth years totalling $715,614. Funding for the fifth (and final) year

was negotiated later, at the end of the fourth year, adding $85,000 to the contract.

HOW THE SCHOOL DISTRICT LOOKED AS THE PROGRAM BEGAN

The district was known to have a teaching staff among the best in the region; yet the district was also considered to be stable and not eager to accept progressive educational technologies. Nonetheless, the teaching staff and administrators were relatively young and many had experienced recent training at state educational training institutions. The curriculum and teaching techniques were developed from beliefs of some residents and the school board that schools should emphasize the three R's and avoid innovative "frills." In recent years other residents had expressed beliefs that the schools should provide a broad educational program. However, prior to the Experimental Schools program, neither administrators nor teachers had initiated major efforts to update or broaden the program. Self-contained classrooms, traditional teaching, and traditional grading were characteristic at all grade levels. Those teachers who employed innovative personal styles limited their efforts to their own classrooms, and did not challenge the prevailing system nor urge their methods on colleagues.

The Students

At the time of initial ES funding the Constantine schools enrolled 1,637 students. By 1976-77, the final year of the project, enrollment had increased only three percent to 1,691. The student population was stable during the years of the project, although it had grown by thirteen percent

during the eleven school years from 1967 through 1977. More than 96 percent of the students were white; most came from working-class backgrounds.

Elementary students are shepherded through the early grades with a heavy emphasis on order and respect for authority of teachers and principal. Youthful energy is repeatedly channeled into "constructive behavior." Teachers and principals intersperse normative sanctions, rewards, and coercion in their efforts to maintain control. Students were frequently seen to chide classmates who erupted in undecorous expressions, or who wandered out of line in queues for cafeteria or outdoor recess. Conformity to dress and behaviour is encouraged, and accepted by most students.

The patterns of socialization to conform to broadly accepted "middle class" standards is stressed also in higher grades. Students receive support from home and school to accept the curriculum and patterns of control without question. Most students value social control over creative rebellion. Those who are critical of the school's rules and socialization patterns are branded as troublemakers by principals, most teachers, and most fellow students.

Cynicism about the schools and rural lifestyles is widespread by the time students entered sixth grade. Sex, cars, sports, alcohol, and drugs are important elements in daily conversation. Many high school students consider graduation as a time when they will have freedom from the oppressive controls of school and family. Many want to leave home after graduation, to move to larger communities where they believe they will have more freedom and access to the more exciting urban lifestyles.

Prior to the advent of the ES project in Constantine several high school students participated in a work-study program, spending part of

their school day in class and the remainder working in industries and retail businesses. Despite location in an agricultural area, the schools offered no courses in agricultural education, reportedly due to a lack of student interest.

Students participated enthusiastically in the athletic programs and athletes were esteemed in school and community. Student government operated as an extracurricular activity in the middle school and high school with virtually no influence in school policy and operation. Consequently, participation in student government carried less prestige than excelling in athletics.

From 1965 to 1972, an average of 40 percent of the graduates of Constantine High School enrolled at nearby universities, colleges, community colleges, business schools and trade schools, significantly below state and national averages during this period. No records are available on the number who completed such additional schooling, although the attrition rate is believed to be high.

The Financial Resources

The school district budget totaled $1,291,492 in 1971-72, with an expenditure of $702 per pupil. By 1976-77, the budget had grown to $2,082,694,[2] with an expenditure of $1,079 for each of 1,691 pupils.[3] The school tax rate totaled 25.32 mills in 1971-72 and dropped to 23.48 by 1976-77, four mills below the state average. This decrease resulted from a reduction in the cost of long-term debt. The 1976-77 rate was one mill lower than that for any nearby district. In 1971-72, the district was supported by a total state equilized property tax valuation of

$21,599,766, or $13,107 per pupil. By 1976-77 the total value had grown to $40,022,990, $23,668 for each pupil.

Property taxes accounted for 37 percent of school district revenues in 1971-72, and state aid amounted to 58 percent. By 1976-77, property taxes made up 41 percent, while state aid had declined to 47 percent. The 12 percent remainder was accounted for by federal sources, primarily Experimental Schools funds.

The voters approved bond levies in 1953, 1956, and 1964, to pay for new school buildings. During those years building costs were relatively low, so that the debt retirement burden was less than one-fourth of the state average. Through shrewd management of general operating revenues, some buildings were constructed or enlarged without asking the taxpayers for additional funds. School owned property was worth $6,343,705 at the beginning of the 1976-77 school year.

OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL PROJECT

The primary objective of the project was to provide a learning environment in which student attitudes toward self and school would be improved. The findings from an attitude assessment scale of self esteem in the previous year's state assessment test were the only measure of student attitudes conducted prior to the planning for Experimental Schools. The plan[4] specified several methods for expanding the school curriculum: teaching was to become individualized and guidance-oriented, student services and guidance counseling were to be increased, travel outside the community and cooperation with the community were to become

important innovations. It also included programs for pre-kindergarten and adult education.

Five Tactics for the Project

The planned change effort used five tactics (called goals by the planners) to achieve the objectives of improved student attitudes and learning. Although not identified with specific educational or philosophical theories, all focused on changing the nature of the students' interaction with their learning environment. The five tactics derived from two themes called humanizing and individualizing. Humanizing was the mechanism by which authoritarian patterns of instruction were to be replaced with egalitarian interpersonal relationships. Individualizing was an alternative to the traditional classroom instructional method in which students would be taught at individual rates.

The first tactic, Guidance Approach to Teaching, was described as a new approach to teacher-student interaction, and clarified the humanizing concept.

> Basic to this approach is that learning will be conducted in a compassionate and supportive manner where teachers guide, motivate, and encourage learning rather than dictate or lecture. The teacher will help each student develop to his potential as he uses acquired skills in interaction with persons and things in his daily life. To promote such interaction, the teacher must serve as a resource person with a focus on the learning environment rather than on the teaching act and the subject content.

Individualized Instruction was defined as a program "which is individually responsive to the needs and desires of each student." It was to be executed through the use of "alternate instructional methods and schedules," and "materials and devices suitable for individualizing the instructional process."

The three remaining tactics were designed to be supportive of these two major concepts. The third, Building Bonds of Trust, expanded the objectives of humanizing to include all participants in the educational process, students, staff, and community residents. It was focused on an intention to develop trusting relationships as the basic pattern of interaction. "It is our intent that the educational environment be conducive for mutual trust of all involved. To this end, our goal is to develop understanding and confidence in ourselves and others."

The fourth tactic, The Community as a Classroom, focused on breaking down the traditional limits of the classroom as the learning environment.

> ...the development of a school curriculum in which the boundaries of the classroom are unlimited. A community life centered curriculum is the extension of the natural learning environment, with the school classroom serving as a coordinating center for a variety of experiences. In this curriculum, the community and the school move closer together as resources are shared cooperatively.

The intent was to use existing resources of the community, permitting students to travel from the classroom to make use of these resources, as well as those outside the community.

The fifth tactic stated a desire to involve members of the community in all phases of the project. It was labeled Partnership Involvement.

> Basic to the development of the Experimental Schools project in Constantine is the involvement of all segments of the community in the planning process. As a result of the success of this partnership, it is our intention to further involve students, staff and community people in the planning, implementation, participation and evaluation of school programs.

In addition, there was a plan for high school building skills students to construct a major portion of a new middle school building during a ten-year period from 1975 to 1984. The vocational education component was to be ex-

panded to overcome the recognized problem of not providing sufficient career instruction for students who did not plan to go on to college.

The five major tactics were not goals, as stated in the plan. Rather, they were the means to accomplish less well defined objectives to improve the educational environment and attitudes of the students. The improvement of student attitudes was ultimately the purpose of the project.

REMODELING THE CURRICULUM, NOT THE AUTHORITY STRUCTURE

The plan called for modifications to the school system rather than reorgination of its existing structure. No changes were proposed in administration and governance of the district, nor in rules and regulations by which the system operated. The external structure was to remain intact, while alterations were made in the internal operating components. A consultant employed by the National Institute of Education visited the site during the second year of implementation and described the program as "the renovation of a school district." What was happening, he said, was analogous to remodeling a house: improving the electrical and plumbing system, painting and papering the walls and ceilings. Such changes improve the appearance and functioning of the house, without altering its basic structure or shape.

The plan document focused on several related problems which were recognized by school personnel. First, the staff realized that low self-esteem among students was a serious problem: "It appears that many students have negative or apathetic attitudes toward school, the administration, teachers, other students, and education in general."

Second, the plan blamed teachers for being insensitive to student needs and individual differences:

According to student reactions the high school principal and some

> faculty members are lacking in compassion and understanding, at least to a certain segment of the population. . . Students feel there is a lack of concern for individual student progress, that some teachers are too "subject oriented" and are only concerned with "how many pages do we cover" or completing the book . . .Little is being done to develop positive social attitudes, respect for individual differences and opinions; acceptance of each other and acceptance of self.

Third, the instructional program was criticized for being limited to a single method--one which was "subject oriented." It was faulted for being inflexible to individual differences and for stressing conformity to "an average pace." This subject orientation was also blamed for other shortcomings of the system, including recognition that the district scored below state averages in reading and math as reported by the Michigan Assessment testing program.

The vocational curriculum was cited as a "weakness" in both middle school and high school. It was believed that the school system had been more successful in preparing academically oriented students for higher education. Students not interested in higher education or who found school less challenging had fewer educational opportunities. It was also recognized that little was being done to inform students of the wide range of careers available.

The Middle School building, constructed in 1927, was described as old and deteriorating. The rooms and hallways were small and overcrowded and some classes were too large for individual attention.

The schools were criticized for not developing responsibility in most students, but especially in low motivated students. Both under-achievers and successful students were described as frequently lacking definite goals for the future. A lack of guidance personnel within the school system was suggested as a cause of this problem. "However, it is certain that there is a need to orient all school personnel to a school system that is more child-centered than subject- or system-oriented."

The plan recognized a lack of individual attention to students and insensitivity on the part of some teachers as problems directly connected to student difficulties with learning and self-esteem. It called for a significant change in relationships between teachers and students, one intended to produce a more conducive and open learning environment. The major objective of the program was to develop an educational process based on interpersonal relationships rather than a "subject-centered" orientation.

Fourth, the plan document noted concerns about the nature of the rural community and the experiences of children living in it. "Approximately seventy-five percent of the entire student body is bused to school which causes difficulty in providing services for all students outside the regular school day." Those students who depended on bus transportation and participated in extracurricular activities were required to find their own transportation. Plans were made to provide after-school transportation services for participants in extracurricular activities. A survey of ninth- and twelfth-grade students indicated many had never traveled more than a few miles from home. The proposal identified travel experiences as an "important aspect of the instructional program."

The plan identified ten "comprehensive curriculum components" designed to "significantly change and improve the instructional program of the Constantine Public Schools, making it more responsive to the individual." The curricular components included language arts, math, careers, arts, physical education and recreation, community and family life, outdoor education, educational travel, early childhood, and continuing education. Also includes were three components called support services "designed to be supportive of and integrated into the educational process of the school system. For the most part, these three components act as supportive vehicles for achieving the curricular

objectives." These components included student services, media, and transportation.

Within each component, the plan specified discrete curricular units to be developed at various grade levels. For example, the language arts program included personalized reading for grades three through eight; a reading laboratory for grades nine through twelve; handwriting and oral skills for grades six through eight; language arts exploration for grades six through eight; and language arts courses, workshops and independent study for grades nine through twelve.

Some components were also integrated and intended to complement each other. In laguange arts, "community resource people" were to be used to supplement and augment the offerings in the exploratory package planned for grades six through eight. Within this same "exploratory" unit, travel experiences were "to motivate students in dramatics, journalism, debate and other language arts areas." Similarly, the arts curriculum (including music) was to be integrated with other components, to use "art as an instructional tool."

The components were the instructional and support service units through which the project would provide a learning environment in which student attitudes toward self and school would be improved. The curricular components would be integrated with the five tactics (i.e., goals) and would be the avenues through which all associated with the schools would apply the principals of humanizing and individualizing.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS

During the planning year, substantial efforts were made to learn of innovative programs developed by other school systems. Teachers and administrators visited other districts and two state universities to observe specific

innovative educational programs. These visits were later considered by teachers as a preferable method for professional improvement than the more expensive mechanism of in-service training sessions attended by large numbers of faculty members. However, from the administrative viewpoint, visits to other school districts could not be uniformly applied to all teachers and were subject to less control.

The superintendent in Constantine also established contact with superintendents in other experimental schools. During the early months of 1973, he attempted to schedule a meeting of the superintendents of the six rural districts then participating in the program. This effort was discouraged by the federal program director who feared that interaction among the sites might lead to contamination of the various projects.

Consultants

Prior to project funding, the school district relied on few outside consultants. However, during the planning and early implementation of its programs, there was extensive use of consultants to assist in planning the project. One group of consultants was involved in the development of the plan, writing up the formal document, and in designing the formative evaluation effort. Other consultants with various specializations were hired to assist with particular components.

During the early months of the planning year, the school district contracted for the services of an educational consulting organization affiliated with Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. This assistance was to help produce a final plan document for delivery to Washington in December, 1972.

Because most of the basic outline for the project was developed in the

initial letter of interest, much of the consultants' efforts were directed to refining the concepts and organization of the plan document.

Some school staff members were critical of the consulting firm. Despite their assistance, the plan submitted to the ES program staff in Washington, D.C. (ES/Washington) on December 15, 1972, was not satisfactory to its reviewers. Support for the consulting firm dwindled as residents, including school board members, questioned whether the money paid for services had been "well spent," and the relationship was terminated soon thereafter.

Some relationships with consulting firms were, however, more successful. One which was particularly satisfying was with an institute for research on early childhood in New Haven, Connecticut. The perceptual component of the project was directed toward a physical education and testing program for the early grades, to improve motor skills and help eliminate learning difficulties. Consultants from the institute conducted workshops to aid teachers in identification and correcting of these problems. Several teachers and a principal also visited the institute for further study. This relationship led to the establishment of contact with an architect who assisted teachers to adapt existing classroom structures for improved student acessibility.

WRITING THE PLAN: FRUSTRATION AND COMPROMISE

The formal project plan was written by the administrators and outside consultants with the assistance of the committee. When submitted in December 1972, the completed plan signaled the beginning of a new phase in relations between school district and federal agency. After months of planning and struggling to write a document which contained the promise of a program of change, it was time for judgment from policy planners in Washington. "Is the federal program director really capable to judge our needs here in Constantine?"

"What degrees does the project officer have which qualify her to make decisions about our schools?" These and similar questions were asked by the administrators anxious about the expected response.

The month of January, 1973 brought these issues to the forefront when the project leaders received the formal critique and response to the plan noted above. The communications indicated overall appreciation of the efforts made to develop a comprehensive plan for change in the schools. However, the response also indicated that the plan needed substantial reorganization.

Four basic criticisms were made: (1) the goals were not related to the proposed methods for changing the program; (2) the proposed changes lacked integration and conceptual organization; (3) the goals for the guidance approach to teaching would be difficult to accomplish; and (4) the intended goal of individualizing instruction was not consistent with the use of methods focused on "remediation." Finally, one reviewer criticized the plan for showing little in the way of specifics tailored to the particular character of the Constantine district. Nonetheless, the ES/Washington response declared that the goals of the proposals were "strong and realistic for the community."

The school administration discerned two kinds of criticism in the response. First, it appeared the federal agency was asking for greater precision in the writing of the proposal. This kind of criticism was acceptable. But school administrators also concluded that the "Feds" were criticizing the plan as overambitious. Such criticism, through written and telephone conversations, seemed to be an indication of lack of confidence in the capabilities of the rural school system; local pride was challenged.

The administrators, anxious to activate their project, believed further refinements of the plan were a waste of time. Requests for revisions without accompanying directions frustrated them. The first project officer assigned to

Constantine failed to alleviate the confusion and frustration. Subtle suggestions, which she offered but never clarified, produced anxiety for those involved in rewriting the plan. Uncertainty about what was required in the document continued. The ES/Washington project officer's attempts to provide help, which she intended as suggestions only, were perceived as directives. They were considered as authoritative and were either accepted directly, or more frequently, rejected.

Following submission of the second draft of the plan in mid-February, the federal project officer visited Constantine and informed the project staff that another "complete rewrite" would be necessary because of a lack of specificity and organization of the document. The second rejection convinced the superintendent and the project coordinator the "Feds" were trying to force the plan into a framework which was compatible with the needs of Washington bureaucrats rather than with objectives of the original application. Moreover, the superintendent was angered because he believed the original concept of the federal program, emphasizing local initiative, was threatened.

The superintendent and project coordinator were willing to reorganize the plan and make it more conceptually consistent. But they were dismayed by demands to modify the plan to suit outsiders (i.e., Washington bureaucrats) if the results would be less acceptable to residents of the school district. They were concerned about extra costs involved in each rewriting task. The requirements for rewriting added unplanned costs to the project, required explanations to the school board, and most importantly, forced the project leaders to devote considerable time to the task of rewriting the document. They were unaccustomed to such a process of write and rewrite involved in proposal development. Their time, they believed, could be better used in developing programs, organizing teachers, involving pupils and residents, and instituting pilot programs.

By the middle of April 1973, the federal program director realized that administrators in Constantine were angered and sent a consultant to assist in completion of the plan. The consultant conveyed a hope that the administrators would concentrate their document on five components which were most thoroughly planned, and delay plans to activate eight other components until later.

The administrators, angered by this suggestion, asserted that they were competent to activate all components of the plan; that the only problem was the reluctance of the "Feds" to provide direct help for preparing a final draft of the plan.

The consultant was apparently convinced of the competence of the administrators and their desire to activate all components of the plan. He communicated those views to the program director with his recommendation that the entire plan be approved. He also criticized ES/Washington staff members for their failure to be consistent in communications with the Constantine project leaders.

These communications convinced project leaders that the "Feds" were more concerned with the specific components, the subject areas of the project, than with the unifying themes of humanizing and individualizing. The components were the specific elements within which the themes were to be developed and applied to the students; the themes were the actual educating process, while the components were the elements through which the themes were applied. By stressing the importance of the components while ignoring the themes, ES/Washington staff were reflecting one of the most common weaknesses of educational innovation: emphasizing the mechanics of the process while excluding the conceptual framework upon which the change process is built. Each rewrite of the plan by project leaders placed greater emphasis on the components while giving lesser

importance to the basic themes.

The consultant's visit and his subsequent report had a significant effect on the administrators. His criticism of the federal agency increased confidence in their proposed project. Subsequent telephone conversations with the federal project officer convinced them that her superiors had told her to iron out the communications difficulties. She invited the administrators to Washington for a discussion of the plan "page by page, if necessary" and to discuss a preliminary budget. The project coordinator and his assistant accepted the invitation, but the superintendent declined, indicating he would not participate until the final budget was negotiated. He was angered and used this opportunity to demonstrate that the school district's autonomy was not to be compromised.

SWEET AND SOUR SUCCESS: THE PLANNING YEAR ENDED

In May 1973, the administrators went to Washington for final negotiations and to sign a three-year contract. They emerged from that session confident that they had been treated less harshly than most other ES project sites. They also believed that the third draft of their plan, submitted on May 11, 1973, was more sophisticated and complete than those of most other participating districts.

Although they were placated, the federal agency required them to rewrite their plan once again. This fourth version was forwarded to Washington on August 15, 1973, eight months later than the original date anticipated by the administrators.

Support for the project was easily won from citizens who supported the superintendent and his efforts to improve the school system. A positive attitude toward the project quickly developed among the school board, Parent

Teacher Association leaders, Rotary Club, and others who were informed of the progress of the planning.

Confidence in the ability of the school district to implement the plan was exemplified in a statement by one board member: "We would have done most of these things, anyway. The money only helps us to do it." Some involved in planning the program shared this confidence, although with less certainty that the goals could be achieved without the federal funds. Most residents of the district, however, were not impressed by the project. Despite the superintendent's efforts to inform the public of its innovative goals, and the federal funds available, few recognized the potential of the project. The conservative political values of most residents contributed to a fear that the project was another federal government intrusion into local affairs.

The early enthusiasm of some teachers dwindled substantially by the end of the planning year. The change of attitude was brought on by four interrelated circumstances: (1) few teachers were involved in project decision-making; most communications between the federal agency and Constantine were limited to the superintendent and project coordinator; (2) teachers believed their suggestions and ideas were ignored; (3) teachers believed project activities would interrupt "normal classroom activities" and (4) many teachers believed that they would be assigned extra duties without additional compensation.

Teachers had volunteered many hours of their time in developing the project components, without compensation. Yet, they later complained that much of their work was disregarded by the administrators. Rewriting the proposal three times caused many of the original ideas and suggestions to be modified or abandoned. The teachers claimed their work was replaced by the suggestions of administrators, simply "because an administrator had a different

idea."

In one project component, teachers repeatedly recommended a full-time coordinator of media services to improve usage of the extensive audio-visual resources of the school district. These requests were turned aside by the administrators who preferred to avoid adding another person to the payroll. Instead, the responsibilities were to be divided among several employees, adding to their existing duties. Teachers complained that this "piece-meal approach hampered and restricted our whole AV program."

As the planning year progressed, the teachers' concerns were aggravated; they worried that the administration would assign additional work responsibilities. One teacher described this situation:

> . . .the main concern was not with pay for volunteer work but with pay for mandatory work. The teachers simply wanted to get paid for required work beyond their normal workload.

Teachers wanted pay for all work they considered "required work," that which the administrators ordered them to do. They claimed they were still willing to volunteer beyond their regular duties, but such volunteer work would have to be what the teachers wanted. They made a distinction between those work-related activities which they did voluntarily for the benefit of students, school or community, and those which administrators mandated to be for school or community benefit.

THE FIRST YEAR: COOPERATION, COMMITTEES, AND DIFFICULTY WITH HUMANIZING

Some teachers and administrators remember the first months of project planning as a time of high-spirited cooperation: committees of teachers and residents formed; planning sessions focused on curricular areas; staff assignments were made; and efforts were begun to inform the public. That enthusiasm

faded as the planning was tempered by demands from ES/Washington for a formal document, and the teachers' concerns that they were not involved in making decisions.

In September 1972, committees were formed to work in the areas of mathematics, reading, learning problems, early childhood education, business education, vocational opportunity, recreational activities, music-humanities, penmanship, humanizing, self-concept, school-community relations, and exploratory. Teachers made individual decisions whether to participate in planning the project and which, if any, committee to join. Many of the committees were composed of teachers sharing similar teaching responsibilities. For example, of the four members of the committee on music-humanities, three were music teachers.

An in-service advisory committee was established to provide direction and guidance to the project during the five years of funding. Composed of representatives of students, faculty, administration and residents, it met only during September 1972, and never became operational. Its functions were not clearly defined, and the members did not develop a set of objectives. The creation of the committee satisfied a promise in the original letter of intent which, once fulfilled, was ignored.

The entire administrative staff and 65 of the 77 teachers were involved on one or more committees. Twenty-four parents and residents and twelve pupils were involved as members of these committees, including the project advisory committee, which was responsible for overseeing the entire planning process.

This project advisory committee met until May 1973, although it provided no guidance after February 1973. The creation of the advisory committee satisfied another demand by ES/Washington for an overseer committee. Although it functioned effectively for six months, the time consuming efforts to modify and rewrite the formal project plan focused the decision-making

responsibility on the administration. The committee was eventually forgotten. Neither the administrators nor the committee members made efforts to continue its role and community involvement in the leadership of the project ended at this point.

Committees which focused on curricular development and individualizing were more active and produced more effective proposals. Those concentrating on humanizing, self-concept, school-community relations, and "exploratory" made less progress. Even with substantial funds and opportunity for radical change, the teachers and administrators still clung to what they knew best--modifying curricular units--and changing in a fairly predictable pattern. Participation by residents offered a threat of diminished control to both teachers and administrators, which was more easily avoided since there was little interest among residents to be included in the decision making.

In the early months, a discrepancy had arisen between the stated goals of the project, and the interests of the participants. While espousing the humanizing concept, most committees focused on more easily handled ideas of curricular modification. And the intent to have community residents involved in the decision-making process became an almost forgotten idea before the year of planning ended.

This growing gap between stated goals and interests of administration and teachers revealed an underlying resistence to the change process. Teachers and administrators felt far more comfortable making curricular changes than with the less concrete concept of humanizing. There was a lack of clarity about what was expected of them and how humanizing was to be carried out. Some expressed concern that many of the staff lacked necessary skills and motivation to use the humanizing process. Moreover, some teachers believed the organizational structure of the school system, and the preference of many teachers and admi-

nistrators for authoritarian control of students, would negate efforts toward humanizing. Working with individualizing and curricular modifications required less time and effort. To practice the humanizing concept required drastic alterations in the authority structure of the school system. There was less threat of lost power in the classroom and hallways from individualizing and curricular change. Humanizing was interpreted as having potential for lessened order and control. Moreover, lesser familiarity of teachers and administrators with humanizing made some reluctant to accept an untried concept.

The issue of control looms large in the choice by teachers and administrators to fall back on the safer path of curricular change. Teachers and principals know the limits of authority each holds by virtue of an assigned position in the organization. But the planning of a drastic change, which has the potential of altering that authority will be accepted only if the individual is coerced to accept, or has some assurance that the amount of authority will not be lessened. The emphasis here is on normative control.

A basic premise of this case study is that schooling cannot be examined in isolation from the prior and current contextual factors which shape both communities and schools. Thus understanding the change process in Constantine requires analysis of those historical and contemporary conditions which existed when its schools chose to participate in the federally-stimulated Experimental Schools program. The chapters which follow examine those conditions and emphasizes the competition among ideological viewpoints held by various interest groups in the community.

CHAPTER TWO.

RESISTING CHANGE TO PRESERVE AN IMAGE OF COMMUNITY

The history of Constantine is a story of its slow growth and gradually increasing cultural and economic integration with national society. From a period of settlement, and subsuequent transition from agricultural trade center through industrialization, and subsequent transition from agricultural trade center tion and later economic renewal. The school district grew also through annexation of smaller districts, but rejected a consolidation proposal. Through this growth, the community residents have adjusted to the multiple changes produced by closer integration with a more complex society. Some have welcomed each change while others have opposed it. Change was welcomed by those who wanted improvements and saw opportunities for improving their individual or group status. It was opposed by those who saw their personal or group interests threatened.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Constantine Public Schools district covers a portion of seven townships and the village of Constantine. Half the district is in the southwest quadrant of St. Joseph County and half in the southwest quadrant of Cass County along the boundary separating Michigan and Indiana. The village is between the medium size cities of Kalamazoo, Michigan and South Bend, Indiana, each about 35 miles distant. Although the school district covers 110 square miles, the village occupies less than three square miles. All school buildings, services, and administrative offices are located within the village limits. One-third of the students live in the village, while the remaining two-thirds live in the surrounding areas.

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Once described as the "intellectual center of early Michigan," for most of its history the village served as a trade center for the surrounding farming area. Because of extensive changes in transportation, as well as in agricultural production and land use, this is no longer true. However, the irregular outline of the school district boundary (see Figure 1) is similar to the outline of the earlier service area when agriculture was the principal basis of the local economy. Today the school district boundary is expanded somewhat, but does not differ significantly from the earlier usage pattern. With a population of 1,80[illegible], the village is the heart of a community which includes an additional 4,400 persons in the surrounding "service area." The principal service which unites this rural area into a community is its public school system.

SURVEYING THE LANDSCAPE

Visitors passing through the village are presented with a view of a comfortable small town, streets lined with large maples and oaks, stately old homes, and a business district reflecting an earlier era of lively and prosperous commerce. The streets of the village contain older frame houses erected before 1900 and large shade trees giving a quiet and cool appearance during summer months. The southeast corner of the village contains the only large group of relatively new homes though a tract of modern ranch-style homes has developed along the St. Joseph River approximately one-half mile beyond the village.

A major highway passes through the village (see Figure 2) conveying large numbers of travelers to resort areas in northern Michigan and Canada--snowmobile riders and ice fishermen in the winter, fishermen and campers in the spring and summer, and hunters in the fall. The highway serves as

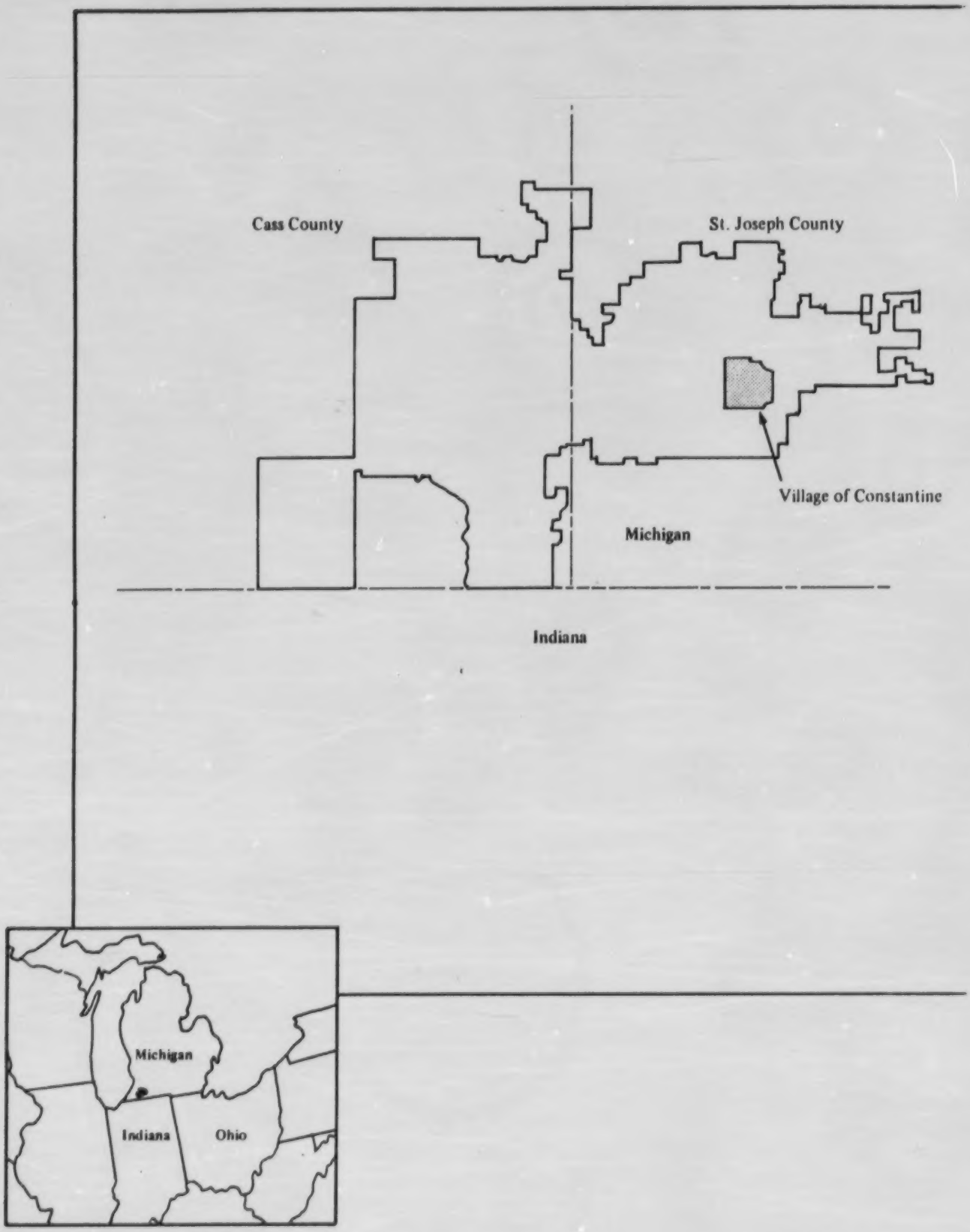

Fig. 1. Outline map of Constantine Public Schools.

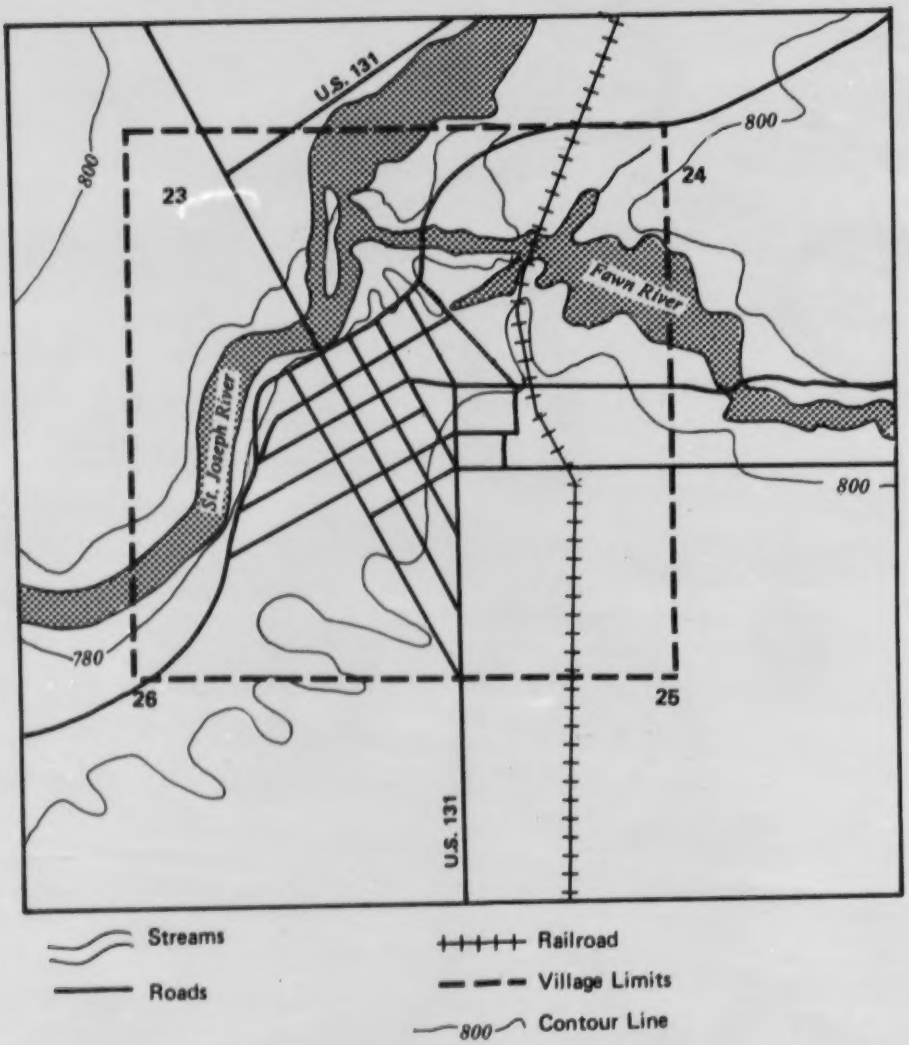

Fig. 2. Topographical map of the Village of Constantine. Adapted from Dowty (1967).

a major artery for trucks carrying gasoline, milk, cereal grains, and mobile homes and recreational vehicles from cities and towns to the north and south. Except for gasoline service stations, little effort has been made to profit from this year-round flow of traffic; there are no drive-in restaurants, no truck stops, no shopping centers to lure the visitor. Like the spokes of a wheel, seven secondary roads also intersect the village, leading in from all major sectors of the surrounding area. For many years, these roads served to transport the farmers and their produce to the village for marketing and exchange.

The commercial district consists of a strip of nineteenth century buildings housing a variety of retail merchandising establishments. Because of the brief travel time to nearby small cities and the 40-minute drive to major shopping facilities, commerce in the village is less important than it was in earlier periods.

The rest of the school district reflects the agricultural background of the region. All roads leaving the village take the traveler past fields planted with corn or soybeans. The landscape is dotted with modest farm homes, each with towering silos nearby for storage of corn. Hogs, dairy cattle, and, less frequently, herds of beef cattle are seen on many of these farms, occasionally grazing on pasture, or more often, feeding on herbage in feedlots. Recent increased use of irrigation from underground water supplies has brought rising farm profits and land values.

Farming has always been important to the area though at present less than ten percent of the labor force is engaged in agricultural production and services. The farmers have always been able to adapt to changing conditions of farm production; over the years, wool, wheat, corn, dairy, and

bean production have each been primary sources of farm income. In recent years, hogs and corn production have become the dominant farm operation.

Only five percent of school district residents derive their principal income from farming. Many live on small parcels of land and commute to work in factories. Having found that farming provides an inadequate income, some have become part-time farmers. They live on their farms, commute to a factory and work the farm evenings and weekends. For them, the primary source of income is the factory job. The dominant residential pattern in the area outside the village is one of rural non-farm dwellings, where residents choose to have a little "elbow room" in their choice of housing while deriving the family income from industrial production in nearby factories.

For most of its existence the village and surrounding rural area have typified the image of a pastoral Midwest community of conservative and stable people. Never far removed from the bustle of urbanizing America, yet managing to maintain a measure of cultural distinctiveness that typifies small town life, this community has a history of continuity from its beginnings to recent decades when the influences of the larger society have made greater inroads on the community. In the early decades through the 1870s, Constantine prospered as a trade center for an agricultural area. After 1880 agriculture began to be less dominant in determining the life of the community. Industrialization was developing throughout America and Constantine became part of that growth. Since 1880 the community has been going through steady change in which fewer and fewer people are involved in agriculture or related services, while more of the residents are dependent on industrial enterprises for a livelihood.

Concurrent with this change, the community has experienced increasing contacts with the larger external society. The transformation in rural life during the first half of the twentieth century is probably greater in its consequences than all the changes which had occurred previously in America's history. Improvements in transportation, communications, education and employment, increased mobility, and the greater integration of different parts of society have contributed to a changed community in the 1970s.

THE SETTLEMENT OF CONSTANTINE, 1828-1850

The history of Constantine is the record of a community which endured considerable change during 150 years. The village today is far different from that of the 1930s or the 1860s. To understand that history, one must be aware of the outside influences and local efforts which have aided or impeded the change process. The several historical periods of this community are examined to provide an understanding of the way life is today.

The first people of Michigan were the native Americans, who hunted, fished, and farmed the land for several thousand years before the arrival of white settlers. The valley of the St. Joseph River was the home of several bands of the Pottawatomie. They occupied the lush praries and "oak openings" of the area. The village is located along a war trail which followed the St. Joseph River.

Michigan's early white settlers were mostly poor people who came in search of the inexpensive and reputedly fertile farming land of the southern Michigan counties. The founder of Constantine, William Meek,

first traveled to this area in 1828 from Ohio and was followed by others from Ohio and Pennsylvania. Most early settlers came from western New York state, however. By 1790, the soils of New England were being depleted and, coupled with a growing population, led to an exodus from that area. Many New Englanders moved to western New York; half a century later, their descendants were among the first settlers of Michigan.

Growth of Industry and Commerce

The industrial and commercial nature of Constantine was well established during its first decade. A newspaper, the Constantine Republican, began publishing in 1836, and from its beginning was a keen promoter of the commercial potential of the village. Flatboats, keelboats, and arks carried wheat and flour to Lake Michigan. The business of the early merchants was conducted mostly by barter and exchange. Most proprietors located their shops along Water Street, adjacent to the river. Dealers took wheat, converted it to flour, and had it shipped to their eastern creditors via the St. Joseph River and the Great Lakes. In exchange, the dealers obtained various goods which were sold locally. During this period, manufacturing began, also. The Republican boasted of carriage and wagon factories, blacksmiths, saddle shops, a gristmill, sawmills, a shingle mill, cabinet and furniture shops, two tannaries. flour mills, farm machinery and equipment factories, and a foundry.

The First School

In the winter of 1830-31, the basement of Niles Smith's store became the location of the first school in the village. Classes were taught by

Thomas Charleton, a clerk in the store. The first schoolhouse was built in 1831 and until churches were built several years later, this building served as a general meeting house. In 1847, the second school building was erected at the same location. The earliest schools in the surrounding farming area were one-room log cabins with crude floors and poor lighting. These schools were usually built at the intersection of two roads where children could walk to them from four directions.

Transition from Trade Center to Rural Village

By 1850, the village was established as a regional trading center, serving the surrounding farming country. The St. Joseph River brought prosperity; large shipments of grain and flour moved downriver to Lake Michigan; returning vessels carried a variety of goods for sale locally. Business boomed and people dreamed of the day when Constantine would be a regional metropolis. Merchants and land brokers advertised the attractive residential lots, the water power for industry, the commercial potential, and the transportation available. However, the growth of the American West and the great transformation of society which began with the industrial revolution following the Civil War were the beginnings of the transition which took Constantine out of the mainstream of progress. From its promising beginnings of prosperity and regional importance, Constantine moved into the modern period destined to remain a small rural community bypassed by developments in human settlement, transportation, industrial production, agriculture, forest products, and communications.

Declining Importance as a Shipping Center: 1850-1880

Almost from the beginning, some recognized a need for increasing transportation services. Plans for a locally financed railroad between Constantine and Niles had been halted by the economic crash of 1837. The charter held by the railroad company stated that the railroad was to make the St. Joseph River a point on its line, and the people of Constantine were led to believe that the railroad would pass through their village, thereby strengthening the already well established east-west river traffic flow. One historical account has suggested, the people of Constantine "were caught napping" and missed the opportunity, for in 1851 the railroad was built through White Pine four miles to the south.

Another account gave credit to John Barry for discouraging the location of the rail line through Constantine. Barry was Constantine's most powerful merchant and three-time governor of the state. His opposition to the railroad, while serving his final term as governor, is recalled in the following description by an 85 year-old resident of Constantine:

> When legislators decided to run the rail line through Constantine, along a route from Toledo to Chicago, Governor Barry was opposed, saying "Hell, no! I'd rather be a king among hogs than a hog among kings."[1] And the rail line was run through White Pigeon.

If this account is accurate, then perhaps Barry might have been interested in preserving Constantine as a small village in which he was the wealthiest and most powerful resident. He might have opposed the establishment of the railroad through Constantine in order to protect his successful grain shipping business on the St. Joseph River. If Constantine had developed as a major rail shipping point, Barry would probably have been challenged

by other entrepreneurs for the leadership of Constantine. It is likely that Barry could not have foreseen the eventual eclipse of shipping as a form of in-land transportation.

Later Barry apparently persuaded the railroad company to comply with the conditions of its charter and to construct a spur line from White Pigeon to Constantine. While serving as governor, it is reported that Barry made use of the railroad spur line to return to his home from the state capital in Lansing.

Undoubtedly, other towns were disappointed when they were bypassed by the railroad, but Constantine surely suffered a shock because of the already existing commerce which was dependent on transporation facilities. Several unsuccessful attempts were made during the next decade to obtain an east-west rail route and the village never gained a position in the new mainstream of commercial transportation.

By the 1860s, Constantine was adjusting to the loss of its importance as a shipping point, and manufacturing began to increase. The Constantine Hydraulic Company was organized to construct dams and improve water power facilities on the St. Joseph and Fawn Rivers. A dam across the St. Joseph was completed in 1873 and included a mill-race for water power on each side of the river. Local industry included sawmills, flour mills, foundries, farm implement factories, a woolen mill, furniture factories, a brewery and a distillery.

During this period, merchants continued to be the most powerful group in the community. The retail trade of the village was the hub of activity and the merchants and bankers provided most of the leadership for the community. Merchants were usually elected to the school board and to

local government offices. Their influence helped to sustain a strong belief in industriousness and free enterprise, and especially in hard work.

Changes in Agriculture and Industry: 1880-1960

The lure of fertile farmland in the western territories caused many farmers to pack up and move west. Their exodus was part of the broad and sweeping changes which occurred following the Civil War. The railroads were pushing west, followed by waves of settlers continuing the search for prized lands of the western frontier. Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska and the Far West territories--all were attractive to those who were less successful in Michigan. The northern counties of Michigan were also being settled, and some of Constantine's residents were attracted to the opportunities in logging and mining which that region offered as well.[2]

From 1880 to 1920, many farms in St. Joseph and Cass counties were deserted; by 1920, only half as many farmers remained to work the land as had done so 70 years before. Those who remained enlarged their holdings by purchasing the lands of those who moved farther west. As wheat production declined, other crops were introduced to broaden the base of the farm economy. By 1920, the chief cash crops were corn, wheat, rye, and potatoes. Dairying, poultry raising, and vegetable growing were also important.

At any time from 1900 to 1970, local industries employed no more than 350 persons, out of a potential labor force of more than 1,200. The creamery, the casket factories, and the paper products factory were major employers with 50 to 80 workers each. For those who remained in Constantine during the early 1900s and no longer derived a livelihood from agriculture, the choice was to migrate from the area or search for work

locally although jobs were not plentiful. By the late 1920s, residents of the area were beginning to commute to the nearby small cities of Three Rivers and Sturgis for employment in factories. For the young, a job outside the community often led to a permanent move away from the home-town in order to live closer to work.

Most residents recall the Great Depression as a period when other parts of the state and nation suffered heavily while Constantine was spared. The Depression struck harder in the northern lower peninsula and in the upper peninsula of Michigan, where lumbering and copper mining predominated. The soils are thin and sandy in those areas, and farming a marginal enterprise. Unlike some parts of the Midwest during the 1920s and 1930s, Southern Michigan was not affected by drought; farm production continued at normal levels during this period. The food processing, paper, and casket making industries in Constantine village were less affected by the economic slowdown than were the automobile industries of Detroit. The out-migration of the earlier decades was halted as more people chose to remain in Constantine during these lean years, thus accounting for much of a ten percent population growth from 1930 to 1940.

The lesser impact of the Depression had some long-term political consequences, however. Many parts of the Midwest experienced widespread poverty which was blamed on the Republican Party and resulted in popular shifts to Progressivism. Such was not the case in southwestern Michigan, where support for the Republican Party remained strong. Nor was there ever a popular belief in state or federal assistance. Because widespread poverty did not occur, the belief in individualism was not questioned. Lack of individual initiative and overindulgence were blamed for povery, not a

maladjustment of the economy.

Economic Change and Renewed Growth: 1960-1970

The relative stability of industrial production in the village through the first half of this century is evident in employment figures: the creamery consistently employed about 50 to 60 workers; the paper factory employed 60 to 80 workers; two casket factories each employed 40 to 60 workers, and the venetian blind factory employed 50 persons. This stability was disrupted in the 1960s, a decade which began a period of economic slowdown.

During the 1960s, the paper factory closed, employment at the casket factory was reduced to about 15 workers, and the venetian blind factory ceased operations. An exception was the creamery, which continued to expand until its work force numbered 100 by 1970. The industrial work force in the village had decreased from nearly 350 to 150.

This decline in industrial capacity during the 1960s was matched by a rapid growth in the mobile home and recreational vehicle industry around Elkhart, Indiana beginning in the mid-1950s. The growth of mobile home production in a nearby city attracted many workers who had been displaced by the reduction of industries in Constantine. No significant economic hardships resulted from the loss of local industry, as most workers were able to shift to the new industry. The significant change was that these workers now worked away from their community of residence; they had become commuters. This new stage of industrial growth signaled some important changes. The locally oriented view of the residents was expanded as they commuted out of their village for employment. The infusion of new jobs with higher pay scales and the in-migration of people from other areas of

the nation, especially Appalachia, brough Constantine more closely in contact with the outside world. New beliefs and life styles were introduced as the locally oriented world of the villagers changed.

THE PEOPLE: YANKEES AND SOUTHERNERS

Since the first Yankee settlers arrived in 1828, the people had been fairly homogeneous. The village population grew slowly after the rapid influx from 1830 to 1870 (Table 1). Many residents are decendents of early settlers, indicating the relatively stable and continuous nature of the population. The decline in population from 1884 to 1910 and the small increase from 1910 to 1930 reflect the lesser economic fortunes of the community during that period.

The period from 1950 to 1960 reflected the highest growth rate for any decade since 1870, and was a result of the rapidly growing mobile home and recreational vehicle industry nearby. This industry produced a demand for unskilled and semi-skilled production-line workers. Migrants from Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and particularly West Virginia, made up a large proportion of its work force. Many chose to live within the school district. Most of these "Southerners," as they were called, did not live in the village. They preferred to live outside the village, often on remote roads. They accounted for most of the 61 percent increase in population in Constantine Township from 1950 to 1970 and similar increases in adjacent townships. Though most shared Anglo-Saxon ancestry with the Yankees, the Southerners had different lifestyle patterns and a status distinction was rigorously maintained by many of the Yankees.

Part of the growth in recent decades was obscured by emigration of young people to college, military service, and work in the cities. Like other rural areas, Constantine has never been able to provide for all of its young people and they have constituted the most frequently migratory segment of the population.[3] The proportion of young adults in the population was unusually low for several decades after 1884, while the proportion of those over 65 years was exceptionally high. A part of this is explained because Constantine was, for many years, a place to which farmers moved when they retired from farming. The village population continues to have a large proportion over 65 years and a small proportion under 30 years. This is contrasted with the surrounding townships which contain larger proportions of those under 30 years. Younger families are more likely to live in the townships than in the village.

The reputation of Midwesterners for joining social and civic organizations is strongly supported in Constantine. In the early years of the twentieth century, the Maccabees, Grange, Odd Fellows, Masons, Rebekah Lodge, Eastern Star, American Legion, Pythians, and Pythian Sisters were all active as fraternal and public-minded organizations. Following World War II some of these organizations became less active, and new organizations appeared to take their place; Rotary and Rotary-Anns, Jaycees and Jaycettes, Parent Teachers Association and American Legion are the most active in recent years. Membership in these organizations consists mostly of Yankees. Usually, Southerners do not join civic organizations, most believing they are not welcome.

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF THE VILLAGE OF CONSTANTINE AND CONSTANTINE TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN, 1835 TO 1970

	Village		Township			
Year	N	% Change[a]	N	% Change	Total Population	Total % Change
1835	300	---	---	---	---	---
1845	---	---	---	---	829	---
1850	760	153.3[b]	734	---	1,494	44.5
1860	879	17.0	1,007	27.1	1,886	20.8
1870	1,290	46.8	1,115	10.1	2,405	27.5
1884	1,398	8.4	966	-13.4	2,364	- 1.7
1890	1,346	- 3.7	795	-17.7	1,141	- 9.4
1900	1,226	- 8.9	693	-12.8	1,919	-10.4
1910	1,244	1.5	666	- 3.9	1,910	- 0.5
1920	1,277	2.7	649	- 2.6	1,926	0.8
1930	1,259	- 1.4	730	12.5	1,989	3.3
1940	1,384	9.9	794	8.6	2,178	9.5
1950	1,514	9.4	797	0.4	2,311	6.1
1960	1,710	12.9	1,062	33.2	2,772	19.9
1970	1,733	1.3	1,363	28.3	3,096	11.7

Sources: Dowty, 1967:55,114, 153; St. Joseph County Census, 1850, Nineteenth Census of the United States, 1970.

[a]Percent change from the previous time period.

[b]Percent change from 1835 to 1850.

Church membership also reflects the division between Yankees and Southerners. Nationally affiliated churches of Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Luthern denominations are located in the village and draw membership from the Yankees and others with higher socio-economic status. Southern Baptist and fundamentalist churches attract the Southerners and others with lower status. The few Catholics must travel to other communities for church services.

THREAT TO LOCAL CONTROL OF THE SCHOOLS

In recent years, the schools have grown in importance and become the most important locally controlled institution in the community.[4] They have been the focus of considerable change efforts, especially in recent decades as the state Department of Education attempted to eliminate the one-room country schools and consolidate districts in the name of quality and standardization. Each change effort met vigorous resistance as residents attempted to maintain local control.

In 1910, the state Department of Public Instruction began a state-wide effort to encourage consolidation of schools and to gradually eliminate the small one-room country schools. This interest was balanced by the desires of rural residents to maintain and control their local schools. The state agency did not pressure local districts to comply until the 1950s. However, by then the rural community was recognizing that many of its functions were being taken over by external agencies and the resistance to consolidation grew as the Department of Public Instruction was increasing its efforts to complete the process.

Annexation

Annexation is the process by which smaller one- or two-room country schools incorporated with and became part of other school districts. While under continuous pressure from state educational agencies, many rural dwellers delayed as long as possible before annexing their country schools to larger districts, because they feared loss of control and increased costs.

The annexation of small country schools to Constantine occurred over a period of two decades and had a significant influence on the development of the school system. The state Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction urged the one-room districts to join nearby larger districts, claiming that higher quality education would result. In an attempt to maintain autonomy, many of the districts sent pupils and paid tuition to Constantine years before they were finally forced to annex. Annexation became a contested issue as the price of education and fears of loss of local control increased.

Pressures to annex were slight from 1910 to 1950. During this period, some country districts began sending their children to Constantine and closed the local schoolhouses. They did not annex, however, and continued to maintain the district by holding annual meetings and regularly voting for operation and the cost of tuition. Some districts maintained school continuously until annexation in the 1950s and 1960s. Others operated their own school during years when enough school-age children lived in the district to obtain state aid, but sent them to Constantine when not enough children were available to meet the state's minimum attendance requirements.

Although the state department did not force smaller schools to join larger districts, it persistently urged them to annex. The movement began slowly, and at least until 1920, most one-room country schools in Michigan

were still operating. In 1910, there were 7,338 school districts in the state; by 1967, that number had been reduced to 740 (Dunbar, 1970:611).

The Department of Public Instruction, with the support of the state legislature, began in 1951 to increase pressure on small country districts to annex by manipulating the distribution of financial aid to the districts. During the 1950s, state aid was refused to any district enrolling fewer than four students. Later, this minimum was raised to ten students. The state department also required 180 days of instruction to qualify for state aid. Many small country districts preferred to hold school only 160 days each year to enable farm children to work during planting and harvesting times. They were forced to comply with the state directive or lose financial aid.

The cost of new school buildings became an important factor as the increasing number of pupils forced the residents of the Constantine district to build new school facilities. Between 1950 and 1956, an elementary school was constructed which required the school district to assume a bond debt. By 1955 the pupil population had climbed to 759, an increase of fifty percent in five years. Concerned over costs of the new school building, residents urged the country districts to pay equal taxes and the school board supported community sentiment.

From 1956 to 1963, ten country districts were annexed and the classrooms became more crowded. In the 1962-64 school year, 1,438 pupils were registered, nearly tripling the 1950 enrollment of 506. The need for additional classrooms was immediate. Voters passed a bond issue in 1964 to construct a second elementary school and the high school.

During the 1950s and 1960s, most village and city school districts in the region were aggressively attempting to annex country districts. The rivalry between the villages of White Pigeon and Constantine was stronger than most; it marked the completion which had existed since they were first settled. While partly an effort to increase the amount of state aid, the competition was also a fight for survival between the two districts. There was a concern that if one district was able to annex most of the available country districts the other village district might eventually be swallowed up.

The interest in preservation of the community school system was related also to economic interests of merchants in the village. They believed annexation and growth of the school district would be good for business because parents would shop in the community where their children attended school. They hoped to expand their trade area through annexation of country school districts.

Annexation of twenty-two small country districts between 1953 and 1970 changed the size and the character of the Constantine district. In 1950, the district covered four square miles with enrollment of 506, including tuition students from the country districts. By 1970, the school district had grown to 110 square miles and in 1972, enrolled 1,659 pupils, two-thirds of whom lived outside the village.

The purpose of annexation was to eliminate the one-room schools and provide a broader curriculum and better qualified teachers in larger schools. Annexation also enabled greater standardization because the small country schools were less likely to accept state mandated changes; they were local units, governed by families and neighbors who lived there.

Annexation terminated one-room schools, and it ended the intimate closeness which many felt toward the little schools.

Years passed before most country dwellers were able to develop an identity with the Constantine schools, partly because all school buildings were in the village. It was difficult, also, to forget the "we-they" dichotomy developed during years when annexation was a heated issue. Country residents had little control in deciding questions of educational policy in the village district. One argument put forth by those who opposed annexation was that the school board was controlled by village residents; the schools were run by the village residents and primarily for the village residents. Rural children were allowed to attend, it was argued, so that state aid to the district would be increased.

Annexation had changed the relationship of village residents to their school district as well. The school system was no longer only for them, but also had to serve equally all country residents. Recognizing the political necessity of gaining a broader base of support, the school board approached a farmer in 1954 and urged him to run for election to the board. He was elected and served three terms until 1966, the first farmer and the first resident from outside the village to gain a seat.

During the 1960s, most school board members were village residents, although a few residents in the surrounding townships also served terms. While antagonisms between village and country dwellers over control of the school decreased, the ability of village residents to elect the majority of board members until 1971 indicated continuing dominant influence in the schools. Since then, however, that pattern has reversed with the

majority of board members from outside the village, indicating growing interest and political strength of country residents. In 1970, the school district population was 5,038; only 1,733 were residents of the village. Annexation had transformed a village school district into a larger rural district with the village as its headquarters.

Consolidation

Even as the White Pigeon and Constantine districts were annexing nearby country schools, the Department of Public Instruction and the Michigan Board of Education promoted consolidation of the two districts. In 1958, members of the state board hosted a meeting in Constantine with the two school boards and urged them to consolidate. Members of the two school boards convinced the visitors, however, that rivalry between the two villages closed out the hope of consolidation at that time.

By 1963, the school systems serving Constantine, White Pigeon and Centreville were in need of additional classrooms and new high schools, as a result of rapid growth brought on by annexation and migration of Southerners. Some residents were convinced a regional high school serving three districts would provide a better program than was possible if each community built a separate facility. Some residents in each district wanted broader curriculum offerings, including foreign languages and more extensive science courses. But, others feared loss of local control and deterioration of athletic competition.

A movement to consolidate began. Proponents argued that consolidation would result in lower educational costs for the districts, and at the same time a broader curriculum in all grades. A citizens' group in

Constantine urged the school board to conduct an investigation of local conditions which might help the district to reach a decision about consolidation with one or more other school districts. When the school board declined, the group raised $300 from private donations and hired two professors at Western Michigan University to do the research. The survey findings led the two investigators to conclude that consolidation would be financially advantageous and would provide a broadened program to benefit all three districts.[5]

Opponents argued that the benefits of consolidation would never be realized. Administrators in each of the districts claimed that curriculum additions would be too costly to implement. Some residents claimed consolidation would result in loss of local control. Opponents argued that the proposed high school would be too distant from any of the available fire fighting equipment, despite the fact that no actual location was ever selected. Some parents were concerned that young athletes would have less opportunity to participate in high school sports if the districts were joined; many parents hoped their sons would become starting palyers on varsity basketball (and football) teams. Consolidation would reduce the number of teams from three to one and the number of starting players from 15 to 5. Many did not want consolidation to end the intense rivalry between White Pigeon and Constantine ritualized in inter-scholastic athletic contests and competitive displays of the high school bands. High school football and basketball games were, for many years, symbolic of this rivalry.

In spring 1963, a proponent of consolidation won election to the Constantine school board, giving strength to those who supported consolidation. Later, supporters petitioned school boards in Centreville, White Pigeon,

and Constantine to place the issue on the ballot. Members of the faculty at Western Michigan University and staff at the Michigan Department of Education supported consolidation of White Pigeon and Constantine. Support for inclusion of Centreville came from both opponents and proponents; both sides apparently believed adding Centreville to the proposition would strengthen their respective positions.

All propositions failed by significant margins on May 25, 1964. The election was the largest turnout of voters recorded for each district. Consolidation was a dead issue and most residents believed the autonomy of each of the school districts had been preserved.

Community Control of the Schools Reaffirmed

The belief in maintaining local control of schools has not diminished in recent years, despite increases in financial aid and coordination of special education and services at the state level. Annexation of smaller schools and the attempt to consolidate schools reveal the continuing conviction of most that local control is essential. Each change effort was supported and coordinated by the state department of education in the belief that changes would improve the schools. Residents were not easily convinced of the inevitability of financial and educational improvement, and fought to preserve local autonomy.

Rejection of consolidation and grudging acceptance of annexation are indications of the unique importance given to schools. Efforts which threaten to take political decision making away from the community and make it part of the national institutional structure are rejected. For

many, the battle against intrusion by external agencies into most local institutions is already lost, but the schools are one local institution which must be maintained.[6] The resistance says more about desire to preserve local autonomy than it does about isolation and parochialism in rural America.

Any change process contains seeds of threat that control will be diminished. The examples of annexation and consolidation have shown that where loss of control is threatened, the change process will not be readily accepted, and may even be rejected. Despite acceptance of societal influences in most areas of community life, most residents remained unwilling to accept transformation in their schools.

CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION WITH SOCIETY

No longer isolated from the cities, Constantine offers rural living with ever-increasing contacts with the urban world. This changing way of life causes an ambivalence, however. While willing to accept benefits and amenities of urbanized lifestyles, many residents still desire the greater autonomy and simpler pace of rural living. Since World War II, relative isolation of the rural community has gradually disappeared and been replaced by interactions with a variety of societal influences. Changes in work patterns and occupational roles, and decreased reliance on agriculture have produced changes in lifestyles, and brought increased population mobility. The increase in social services directed by governmental agencies located outside the community, and bureaucratization of the school system, produce ambivalence; local control or standardization and quality of service.

Residents recognize that the community cannot remain isolated and most choose not to live such a life. They want the benefits of modern society, yet worry about loss of local control and infiltration of lifestyles on ideas. There is recognition of trends toward increasing size and complexity of organizations. Large corporations are necessary for manufacture of material goods, as well as organization of capital. Large corporations employ many of the residents, so there is a familiarity gained through work. Yet, large corporations also contribute to increasing mobility. Those who work for such corporations are likely to be transferred from the community, and strangers will replace them. Neighborly familiarity is broken by increasing mobility. Newcomers are often ignored until they are defined as nonthreatening. They bring new ideas and strange manners which some locals are reluctant to accept. To long-time residents there is continuing erosion of the neighborly spirit which they recall from earlier years.

Constantine is changing, that is certain. National institutions have increasing influence. Federal and state governments increasingly affect local affairs through an array of social services, funds, cooperative agreements, and regulations. National corporations control most industrial capacity and are managed by unseen strangers. Since 1960, most local manufacturers have been bought out by larger firms with home offices located elsewhere. The schools are still run by a board of education, but state agencies dictate many rules of operation and provide half the funds. The ability and desire of the community to provide support to those in need has been displaced by federal and state agencies and regulations.

Respect for the national image and its institutions is offset by a fear held by most that they are losing control over their own destinies.

Increases in integration of local and non-local segments of society since the 1960s have weakened the rural resident's sense of security. Most people in Constantine are concerned about growth of state and federal government, which demands an increasing tax burden and, at the same time, demonstrates inefficiencies and abuses. Sense of pride in community and the nation is weakened by awareness that a growing proportion of personal income is withdrawn as taxes to support public programs, many of which are never seen and are opposed.

Welfare fraud, tax evasion by the wealthy, ineptitude and criminal behavior by political leaders, monopolistic coercion by large corporations, external intervention in schools and other local institutions, and the increasing tax burden are examples of conditions which they feel powerless to change. Residents talk about the government in the third person as if that collection of agencies and individuals were alien to them. "They" is a common term for identifying all political leaders and nameless bureaucrats who pass laws and enforce regulations which seem to limit individual autonomy. Residents worry about government, especially at the state and federal levels. They view those governments as urban oriented and controlled; they believe that most public monies are spent on urban projects.

Although worried about loss of personal control and community control, residents were also aware of the importance of the integrated society as it provides a cultural and material basis for life. Residents regularly traveled to nearby cities for entertainment and shopping. Without automobiles and travel trailers, refrigerators and freezers, life would be less comfortable. Smooth and safe roads, adequate police protection, and efficient automotive services were expected while traveling. Television and radio provided

entertainment and news of great variety. The local community was unable to provide most of these services and corporate and governmental organizations of larger scale were necessary to provide them. To most, living in the rural community provided the best of both worlds; one could live "in the country" with enough "elbow room" for gardens, pets, and raising livestock. The advantages of the city were near enough, however, to be accessible by automobile.

Not all residents were ambivalent about effects of the national society, however. Some were anxious to have contacts with urban communities and wished for increased influence from non-local institutions. This minority viewed the rural community as incapable of providing adequate services to the residents. They did not want to live in the city but were oriented toward the cultural and organizational sophistication of the city. They urged greater outside influences in the operation of the local schools, government, and human services, as the best means to improve the quality of those institutions.

At the other extreme was a small minority who resolutely maintained that non-local forces should not influence the local community. They hoped for a return to a time when the local community completely controlled the schools, when local government made most decisions, state and federal governments were less influential, and human services were fewer and controlled community organizations.

Residents sustained two conflicting images of the rural community; one, of a bustling center of business and social activities where life is comfortable and always good, and second, that it is stagnating and struggling for survival. For those active in civic and social organizations, there was

the Babbitt-like booster view that Constantine is alive and well, although it was also believed that continuous efforts were required to maintain that vitality. This belief was accompanied by another--that there must be continual vigilance to preserve what remains of local autonomy in village, township, and county government, in the governance of the schools, in the control of churches, social organizations and youth groups.

Among those who viewed the local community as stagnating, there was acceptance of the dominance of external forces in the local community.[8] Those who accepted this second definition did not participate in governance of local institutional structures. Consequently, the institutions were governed by those who were more optimistic and preferred local control. Those who served on school board and local government believed they exercised local autonomy, and they acted to preserve it.

The image of stagnation occurred with greater frequency among those with greater contact with external agencies. Among those with more cosmopolitan outlooks, there was greater desire for interaction with the outside world. School teachers and managers of absentee-owned firms in the community were more likely to have moved to the community because of their employment. They did not have the socialization, or family and group attachments that native-born residents possessed. They were conditioned by experiences of living in other communities. They did not accept Constantine as a permanent home, but considered it only the current place of employment, and residence. The difference is between those who sought local status and those who sought cosmopolitan status. Newcomers to the community were more likely to have a cosmopolitan outlook, while those who were long-term residents were more likely to have a local orientation.

The social structure of the district reflected the confrontation between local and cosmopolitan value systems. The local-oriented group wanted the community to achieve greater autonomy; the cosmopolitan group viewed community life as integrally connected to centers of power outside the community. The two strategies overlapped and affected everyone in the community, but was seen most clearly among leaders and influentials in the community.

The community had different types of leaders who attempted to make their influence felt in different ways. There were institutional leaders, including school superintendent, ministers, school board, township, and village elected officials, bankers, and lawyers. There were grass-roots leaders[9] who did not hold institutional positions in the community but appeared to take charge of a particular issue. When the issue was no longer important, they withdrew, perhaps never again to assume a leadership position. Recent grass-roots leaders included a resident who led a fund-raising drive, another who led a crusade against sex education in the schools, and another who led efforts to oppose consolidation of the schools. Grass roots leaders were likely to be found in opposition to programs and policies promoted by the institutional leadership. The motivation for such opposition occurred in the differing ideologies of locals and cosmopolitans.[10]

There is overlap of the booster attitude and that of the local influential. Both ideological views are focused on maintenance of vitality of community and preservation of local autonomy in the face of increasing influences of external institutions and cultural processes. Those who advanced the ideology sought to promote their way of life against threats to the security of their positions in the community. The most vigorous

proponents were those who believed they would lose influence and status because of increasing integration with those institutions and processes.

Similarly, there was an overlap of the beliefs of those concerned that the community was stagnating and those interested in greater cosmopolitan influences. Both believed the community needed external inputs of resources to provide necessary services, economic stability, and cultural stimulus. Those who supported this ideological position were frequently willing to support changes to status arrangements in the community. They less frequently viewed externally initiated changes as threats to order in the community. A basic difference between the two ideological positions was the degree of acceptance of change brought on by integration of external influences.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS

An individual's status in Constantine was a product of several factors, including occupation, family characteristics, civic participation, and other visible manifestations of life style choice.[11] Occupational role, along with income and education were the primary determinants of social class position for the individual and family. It was a result of differential evaluation made by neighbors about the full-time, functionally significant role that one occupied. The amount of respect accorded to an individual was determined by the relative rating given to those status characteristics.

Family status was partly determined by the occupational role of family members. There were, however, other criteria which were independent of occupational status. One criterion was evaluation of the individual as "good" or "bad". A second criterion consisted of contributions family members

made to neighborhood, community, and society. Therefore, behavior of an individual family member, in part, determined status of the family as a unit. The third criterion identified the contemporary family through lines of descent. If information about previous generations was known, it was used in evaluating the contemporary nuclear family. It was possible for an individual's family status to be higher (or lower) than occupational status.

Participation in the community through length of residence and contributions to civic welfare were criteria for judging a person's local-community status. Heavier emphasis was laid on amount and kind of civic involvement. Lesser importance was attached to number of years of residence. In years past, length of residence was considered more important due to the greater population mobility of the 1960s and 1970s. There were more newcomers in recent years, and the distinction from long-time resident families gradually became less important. A newcomer who actively participated in community projects did not lose identity as a newcomer; that remained for years. But the active person was highly regarded for taking interest in the community.

Participation in Community Affairs

Those who did not become enmeshed in the network of civic and informal organizations, were able to enjoy the slower and more relaxed pace of rural living. But for those who were active in local government, scouting, church organizations, and other community groups, the community was a tightly knit and well organized collectivity which demanded much. Some were motivated to

participate because they wanted to maintain the vitality of the community and helped to provide services which otherwise would not be available. Others participated because of the increased status or business contacts generated as a byproduct of such involvement.

For the businesswoman or man, there was pressure to serve and contribute to the variety of projects. Refusal, it was feared, might injure business or individual social ambitions, even the children's status at school. The few professionals in the community were frequently involved because they were recognized as having superior organizational skills and contacts which were beneficial to the project. Those with lesser status were also asked to join because of continual membership shortage in most organizations.

Constantine suffered from a shortage of leadership in civic organizations, local government and school board. Those willing to serve frequently found themselves so occupied with civic projects they lacked time to attend to personal affairs. As a result, participation in community affairs was limited to a small number of individuals who were very active. For most residents, however, participation in organizations, serving in local government or the school board, were unnecessary parts of life. They preferred a less complicated life which did not make demands on their leisure time. Constantine did not substantiate the untested belief that citizens of small towns participate more frequently than urban dwellers in social, civic or governmental organizations.

COMPETING IDEOLOGIES AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

There was a competition between two opposing ideologies of community control. One view opposed external intrusions into the cultural and institutional elements of the community; the second view favored them. The locus of competition and the key issue was control within the community. The ideology through which leadership was maintained by local-oriented groups in the community centered on participation in community activities. Political leadership in the community was primarily exercised by members of the middle class and particularly by those with high occupational status as merchants, wealthy farmers, managers, and professionals.

Four groups within the community could be identified at different locations on an imaginary continuum describing degree of participation and political leadership. The first group, which attempted most frequently to exercise control, consisted primarily of local influentials. They were the boosters in the community; they clarified the ideology of local control and the importance of participation as a prerequisite for recognition as an influential. The second group consisted of cosmopolitans who opposed the ideology of the locals and offered an alternative which encouraged acceptance of intrusions from outside the community. More frequently they were newcomers to the community. Cosmopolitan influentials were less likely to derive status identification from family and local-community ties; it was derived from occupational status. Cosmopolitan influentials were more likely to view the community as stagnating since status was not tied so intimately to locally derived measures of status. They were less likely, therefore, to lose influence in the community through decreases in community

autonomy. The third group consisted of the large number of residents who accepted the ideology of the local influentials, although they did not actively promote it. This group included members of the working and middle classes. The fourth group consisted of working class and middle class members who favored but did not actively support the ideology welcoming external influences. The latter two groups made up a large majority of the population and left confrontations over conflicting ideologies to those local and cosmopolitan leaders who actively supported the opposing view.

Conflict over the opposing ideologies had its roots in the community stratification structure and in the substantive views of local and cosmopolitan influentials who competed for political control. Members of both groups sought to serve as leaders, bargaining for support from the majority of the community. One group saw those interests best served through exercise of local autonomy and avoidance of intrusions by cultural and institutional contacts. The other group saw the interests of the community served by increased contact and influence from external sources. Both groups were central elements in determining the nature and extent of increasing vertical integration of the community with the larger society.

CHAPTER THREE.

PRESERVING LOCAL INFLUENCE: CONTROL OF THE SCHOOLS

The purposes of education are many and changing. Likewise, the organization of schools changes and adapts to new challenges. New teachers and administrators replace older ones. New educational technologies and methods of management are adopted. Through all of this, people who work in and manage schools seek ways to solve organizational problems and achieve goals. This chapter examines the nature of group dynamics, patterns of leadership, and conflicts of interest involving teachers, administrators, and school board in Constantine.

SCHOOL BOARD MANAGEMENT

As the school district expanded from annexation of twenty-two one- and two-room schools, the relationship between the village and the schools altered to accommodate the expanded school district community. However, the new geographical boundaries of the district did not coincide with other political boundaries. All school buildings were located in the village which provided an advantage to village residents. In recent years, country residents sought a greater role in school affairs and increased their representation on the school board to a majority at the time of the Experimental Schools project. Because of the location of the schools and because the village held superior political power, country dwellers were reluctant to forget the "we-they" dichotomy which had developed when annexation was a heated issue.

The school board was composed of seven members, elected a large for four-year terms. Two members were elected in three consecutive years and a

single member in the fourth year. Although members were elected at large and professed to represent the entire district, they were frequently elected by constituents from a particular geographic area. This informal representation of areas was important because of the growth of the district through annexation.

Those who served on the school board considered its functions more important than those of the village or township governments.[1] The school board met twice monthly--one meeting concerned with budgetary and financial concerns and the second focused on curricular matters. Meetings of the school board covered a wide range of issues including: the budget, athletic programs, the bands and instrumental music programs, appointment and reappointment of teaching and administrative staff, student discipline, the curriculum, transportation of students, the school lunch program, and the maintenance of the school plant and facilities. The Experimental Schools project was added to this list at the end of the 1971-72 school year and continued to be an important issue through the 1976-77 school year.

These issues were important for the board and for all residents of the district; they affected many areas of community life. The spending of local monies for operation of schools is always an important issue, and the board prided itself on frugal management of the budget. Board members frequently pointed out that most residents preferred frugality in school operation and that they, the board members, were merely carrying out the

dictates of the electorate.

Some district residents confirmed that belief and openly expressed pride in fiscal policies of the school district. With high priority placed on efficient budget management, the board had employed the superintendent because of his fiscal management skills and firm attention to maintaining a balanced and limited budget. Aware of the board's concerns, the superintendent maintained close control over the budget and expenditures. He took pride in his ability to run a school system which offered a program equal to any in the region, yet one which kept costs below the average. Because he supported their interests, there was a close and supportive relationship between the superintendent and board members.

The interest in frugality was a part of a political ideology and was more pervasive than interests in curricular improvement and progressive educational methods. The political ideology of the community carried substantial meaning in the way the school board conducted its affairs. Predominate community belief in frugality gave continuing support to actions of the board. There were approved exceptions to frugality, however, in support of high school boys' athletic programs and the high school band, both of which were widely esteemed as important reflections of community identity, strength, and prowess. The athletic issues were important to those who placed high value on the participation of children in athletics, especially inter-scholastic competition. For many, the identity of the school district was tied to the reputation of the football and basketball programs. The school board actively monitored the operation and progress of the athletic program.

REPRESENTING COMMUNITY INTERESTS: MYTH AND REALITY

School board members claimed to be interested in maintaining control of their school system, to represent interests of various segments of the community and assure that the schools represented local values and interests. However, most board decisions were not highly visible to the community. Their actions became widely known only when issues were controversial. Most adults did not have direct contact with the school and learned about changes through reports from their children, newspaper accounts of school board meetings, gossip, and attendance at special events. There was a close working relationship between board members and the superintendent and principals, which frequently placed board members in the position of rubber-stamping existing procedures rather than as developers of policy. This unlegitimated function occurred because board members occasionally permitted administrators to implement changes without formal board approval. Once administrators implemented these changes, it was difficult for the board to revoke them without causing the appearance of a gap in the policy making process. Above all else, the board members sought to avoid an appearance of vulnerability. The potential for vulnerability stems from concern that disagreements will produce critical citizen reaction.

Most school board meetings were attended by one or two newspaper reporters and a small group of high school seniors completing an assignment for a government course. Residents appear infrequently, usually when they

were angered by action or inaction of the board. The teachers' association sometimes had one or more teachers present. There was little general awareness of how the board conducted its business.

Like other governing boards, the school board made a public display of reaching decisions through discussion. Dissenting votes were unusual, and final votes were usually recorded as unanimous. The agenda for the meeting was mailed out to the board members several days in advance, providing members with time to discuss the issues with others before the meeting. When differences existed on a major issue, the board met in executive session, from which the public would be excluded.[2]

Behavior of board members and their families in other community roles affected other board member's opinions about the individual's effectiveness as a representative of the school district. The board member was a leader in the community and was expected to demonstrate the best qualities of civic concern, hard work, and unquestioned moral integrity. The all-encompassing nature of this role was revealed when concerns were raised about an individual's behavior in affairs not related to schools.

There were differences in amount of influence among board members. Influence was related to the member's non-school activities and sometimes to the closeness of the individual board member with the administration. Regular observers of school board meetings recognized that some board members were more aware of issues and problems in school operation. Four of the seven board members frequently visited with the superintendent and

principals individually and were kept informed of unusual circumstances. The others had less frequent contact with administrators and were apparently less informed.

Informal Contact with Community Members

Board members reported that they received few complaints about operation of the school system. Some residents questioned board members about particular issues, but they were a small minority. None of the board members scheduled meetings with residents to solicit views about the school district. They learned about residents' views through day-to-day communication in work or recreational activities.

Members of the school board and administration frequently shared recreational activities. Two board members and four administrators were affiliated with the Rotary Club, and two administrators were members of the Jaycees. The superintendent insisted that all administrators belong to one or both of these organizations; it was considered "part of the job". Each year the Rotary Club president assigned one of the administrators to schedule guest speakers for the weekly lunch meetings, and school related topics were frequently presented. Guest speakers included: the superintendent, who discussed the Experimental Schools project, upcoming levy and board elections, and other school issues; team coaches and highly regarded high school athletes; students who had attained scholastic honors or traveled; and teachers or other staff involved in unique projects.

A friendship network involving board members, administrators, and other influentials met frequently. Several Rotarians, Jaycees, and their wives

(Rotary-Anns and Jaycettes), were part of this friendship network. They held frequent parties at their homes and were especially active during football and basketball seasons. During football season, football coaches and their wives were customarily invited to the parties. During basketball season, the male basketball coaches and their wives were invited. Several families in this network met less occasionally as a "dinner club" to eat at restaurants in nearby cities. Following board meetings, board members and administrators went to one of their homes to "add a social touch" to the evening.

These functions united board members, administrators, and their friends. They provided informal opportunities for discussions of school issues. The parties also permitted board members to discuss issues and reach decisions prior to public presentation at board meetings. They also provided an opportunity to develop and stabilize relationships between board members and administrators.

One administrator described the board's decision making process as

> ...an informal pattern of interpersonal communications among board members. They make most decisions on the basis of rumor, not on the facts presented during board meetings.

He believed that decisions were based on opinions formed in social situations, rather than formal discussions during school board meetings.

Board members used social occasions to develop relationships with the superintendent and principals, and expressed their views in a setting which, while informal, did not lessen the weight of an opinion. In a discussion about school principals, one board member indicated that the superintendent had primary influence over the principals, but noted that the principals "sense our feelings" in a variety of contacts. In defending the party circuit, this board member said,

> The party circuit serves a good purpose. It gives us an opportunity to know each other. However, it hasn't altered my opinion of any of them [administrators and other board members].

As local influentials, school board members developed their influence by cultivating a large number of friendships and participating in an extended network of social relations. They assumed they could be influential by aligning with people who knew them and were willing to help them as well as be helped by them.

A majority of the residents, including blue collar workers and poor farmers, had no contact with school board members. Most were not knowledgeable about school operation and had limited awareness of their own political importance. The board members were all middle- to high-income members of the community; they interacted with that segment of the community more often than with lower income individuals. During the Experimental Schools project years, less than twenty-five percent of the eligible electorates was registered to vote, most of whom were from higher socio-economic levels and were more likely to have contact with the school board members.

Communicating with the Residents

Communicating information about schools to residents was a problem; except for a small circulation weekly newspaper published in White Pigeon, there was no local news source. The district was served by a wide range of news sources located in other communities including eleven newspapers, 30 radio, and nine television broadcasters serving small, medium, and large cities. The problem was not isolation from news and information outlets, but rather, the overlapping of many competing media.

Communicating with school district residents required utilization of several commercial media. Unscheduled school closings were announced over six

radio stations. Informative articles about the district were published in several different newspapers to assure broad coverage. One benefit was that people living in nearby communities were likely to be aware of Constantine school activities.

Communications within school buildings, as well as to pupils and their parents, were maintained through a public address system and printed bulletins. Printed bulletins listed events for the week and news of interest to staff, pupils and parents. Announcements of special events or changes in the daily schedule were announced through the public address system. Perhaps the most rapid means of communication, however, was through the "grapevine" between staff members and students.

SURFACE TENSIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Relations between the school board and teachers were deteriorating when the Experimental Schools project was introduced. Increased demands by teachers brought into the open tensions which had escalated for several years. In 1973, the teachers wanted salary raises and schedule adjustments to bring them even with other comparable districts. They claimed this demand was justified because of the recognized quality of education in the district, and because of a large increase in the cost of living during the previous year. The school board claimed the teachers' salary demands were beyond reasonable limits. They said they would not be "steamrollered" by the teachers' organization into bankrupting the school system. They claimed to be upholding the public trust for frugal management and they criticized teachers for being more concerned with pay raises than the welfare of students.

Teacher demands went beyond salaries, however. They wanted a greater role in making decisions in the school system. They insisted on continuing group medical insurance coverage with the policy sponsored by the Michigan Education Association (MEA). The school board was opposed, wanting to change to a policy sponsored by the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB). The board stated its willingness to continue purchasing coverage from the MEA only if teachers would assume a greater share of the cost. The teachers demanded the right to individual responsibility for selecting personal leave days--two days granted each year to attend to personal affairs. The school board insisted that such freedom would be disruptive to operation of the schools. The board objected to a demand that elementary teachers receive released time for curriculum planning equal to that already granted to secondary teachers. Finally, teachers were concerned that participation in the Experimental Schools program might involve them in additional work and responsibilities, for which they might not be compensated. Most teachers were primarily concerned with salary, and less concerned about their relative lack of influence in decision making. But the president of the teachers' association and an influential minority of teachers were more concerned with the second issue.[3]

In public statements, the school board and superintendent emphasized the teachers' salary demands. However, they too were concerned about teacher demands for involvement in decision making. If they acceded to the salary demands of the teachers, they believed the board would appear to be weak.

They continued to assert that the board, alone, had authority and responsibility to set salaries. If they consented to the teachers' demands for a role in making decisions about Experimental Schools, they would, they believed, open the door to ever-increasing demands for sharing of authority. They were adamant in refusing to permit this change.

School board members viewed themselves as protectors of local community control of the schools; they considered victory for the local teachers' association a defeat for local control. They claimed the teachers were controlled like puppets by the state teachers' association (MEA). Board members viewed teachers as employees who should not be concerned with deciding the goals of the organization. They saw themselves as guardians of the present and planners for the future of the school system. The teachers looked on the board as a roadblock to better schooling. They considered themselves better qualified to set goals for the schools.

These were the surface manifestations of the problem. Changes were beginning to occur in the fabric of organization of the school system.

THE CHANGING ROLE OF SCHOOL TEACHERS

For several years, the teachers in Constantine had struggled with a changing definition of role, from employee to professional. The traditional role definition was challenged by teacher beliefs that they had a particular competence and deserved to have more control over their work. This striving for a professional image as a drive for status is characteristic of emerging professions. Through demands for professional recognition they sought higher status and to lessen the power of administrators and school board who controlled them. They were, however, ambivalent about how hard to push in their efforts to gain greater authority.

This changing role definition occurred gradually as older teachers were replaced by young ones who had been taught progressive ideas about the teacher role. Teachers who had been with the district for many years attached greater loyalty to school and community, and viewed themselves as employees of the district. Many had lived in the community for most of their teaching careers, and their symbolic attachments were strongly welded to the community and their students, present and past.

Some of the older teachers began in one-room schools, which were later annexed to Constantine. They worked for years at low salaries and often in much poorer conditions than those they found when they were employed by the Constantine district.[4] Many remember that job tenure was less secure in earlier years, and teachers were subject to the caprice of the school board.

In recent years, these conditions improved. Salaries increased and tenure laws strengthened teacher rights to job security. During college years, education majors were exposed to a changing definition of teacher role. Concurrently, national and state teacher associations became larger and more effective. The combination of these factors resulted in changes in teacher attitudes toward themselves. They no longer regarded themselves as merely employees, but as highly trained specialists.

For teachers in Constantine, the early 1970s was a time of change. Increasingly, they were concerned with achieving recognition of their accomplishments as teachers. The school board and many residents were

openly expressing pride in the quality of Constantine's schools. Teachers, administrators, and board claimed that the school system was one of the best in southwestern Michigan. The teachers wanted to share in that reputation and be recognized for having a primary role in establishing it. A frequent complaint among teachers was that board members were not reluctant to boast about the quality of education, but were reluctant to reflect that pride by commensurate compensation to the teachers. Teachers also complained that the board intentially kept the baseline salaries--that paid to a first-year inexperienced teacher--close to the equivalent rate in other districts, but paid less, comparatively, to experienced teachers.[5]

The changing role definition of teachers in Constantine involved a desire for high status and more decision-making power. Teachers became more interested in exercising control over their working conditions and group benefits; they also wanted a role in shaping school policies and curriculum.[6]

In a survey conducted by the Constantine Education Association in August 1973, salary was described by the majority of teachers as the most important item in their proposal for a new contract. To them, salary was important for three reasons. First, the cost of living was increased at a high rate during that year, and teachers were concerned about the purchasing power of their wages. Second, teachers believed they deserved a significant salary increase as adequate compensation for their work. Third, many of the teachers were distressed by the previous contract settlement which had netted them a slight 2.9 percent raise in salaries.

Other responses to the survey indicated that teachers were also

concerned with their role as "teaching professionals," which to many was synonymous with their personal effectiveness in the classroom. The teachers placed prime emphasis on "good teaching" and putting forth "extra effort," and the satisfaction which results from knowing that students have been given the best instruction one can give.

Commitment to the Community

Following annexation, the increase in pupils prompted the hiring of additional teachers to meet needs of the expanded school system. With few execptions, the new teachers were not long-time residents of the district. They came to Constantine from other communities in Michigan and Indiana. They considered themselves professional educators; for some, that attitude took precedence over any sense of allegiance to the community. Half of them lived outside the community, preferring to commute to the schools from nearby cities and villages. Few of them were involved in community organizations, and none was involved in local government until spring 1977, when a high school teacher was elected to the Constantine village council. This reflected a change in teacher role which previously found teachers choosing to limit community involvement to school-related activities.

By contrast, school administrators appeared to be devoted to improving community welfare. In addition to belonging to Rotary or Jaycees, most administrators were actively involved with projects to benefit the community. The superintendent and those principals who had served longest in Constantine took these responsibilities most seriously. Recently hired administrators joined only to satisfy the superintendent's expectations. Nonetheless, civic involvement was considered to be an integral part of all administators' jobs. Community involvement matched the expectations of

school board members who claimed to be committed to the ideal of community service; they demonstrated it by serving on the school board.

This distinction between interests of teachers and school board members is similar to the distinctions between local and cosmopolitan community influentials. School board members emphasized local interest, concern with community autonomy and local control of the schools. They concentrated their efforts on preservation of local control and gave less precedence to improvements in education. At the same time, they sought to lessen the influence of teachers whom they viewed as not locally oriented.

Teachers viewed the best interests of the school district as correlated with improved interaction and influence from external education agencies. They considered the efforts of the school board as counter-productive, lessening the ability to jointly produce the best possible school system. Board members argued that teachers could best serve the schools and community by living within the district and actively engaging in community service projects. Teachers believed they could best serve as educators by increasing their professional stature.

Teachers and board members used different criteria in evaluating the status of their respective groups. Board members evaluated status by local criteria, emphasizing civic participation. Behavior of teachers outside the schools was frequently taken into account when judgments were made about commitment to the schools. Teachers preferred to be evaluated on their professional accomplishments with students, and to have their private lives excluded. They wanted accomplishments as teachers to be judged on nationally recognized teaching standards rather than locally derived criteria.

There was an element of dominance in the relationship between board

and teachers, which infused this disagreement over local allegiance. Teachers recognized that they had little power (although they exercised authority over students); they followed orders of administrators and of elected community representatives. They wanted that relationship to change. Board members sought to maintain their authority and claimed that status was granted by elective mandate. Struggles for power are carried out through the manipulation of symbolic encounters. The belief held by the school board (and the administration) that teachers ought to demonstrate commitment to community welfare by living in the community and through civic participation was used to maintain the dominant status relationship with the teachers.

TOWARD CONFRONTATION: STRENGTHENING OF CONVICTIONS

The role of the professional organization has become increasingly important in the governance of schools. The Mighican Education Association (MEA) had been gathering strength partly due to competition from the American Federation of Teachers--which was strong in the Detroit area--and partly because of growth in the National Education Association as a force in educational politics.

Before 1973, the Constantine Education Association (CEA) had been a relatively powerless organization; it lacked support from the membership, especially elementary teachers, and was barely able to muster enough strength to joust with the school board in annual contract negotiations. The result was less than satisfactory contracts for several years. In 1973, however, the membership elected a president who organized that dissatisfaction and developed a stronger organization focused on teacher concerns about salaries and non-participation in decision making.

The introduction of the Experimental Schools project added a new concern. Teacher leaders believed this program would increase their burden without providing additional compensation. Even the most compliant teachers in the system were willing to challenge the school board. The president and the chief negotiator for the CEA developed a bargaining strategy that coupled the older frustrations with this new threat.

Board members believed that teachers all over Michigan were attempting to strengthen their positions in local school systems. They also believed the MEA had developed a conspiratorial plan to coordinate strikes throughout the state, to demonstrate teacher strength to local school boards and the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB).

During spring 1973, an MEA policy committee wrote a position paper which outlined a strategy for support of local affiliates involved in contract bargaining with school boards. The MASB labeled this strategy as a "conspiracy" and warned its member school boards of the possibility of increased strike activity by teacher groups. MEA affiliate organizations were increasingly active in Michigan in previous years, and the MASB concurrently developed a posture of increased awareness and militancy.

Members of the Constantine board indicated firm commitment to the tradition that schools should be directed by locally elected individuals who have the ultimate authority to decide on the important issued. They further clarified their beliefs that day-to-day decisions should be delegated to the superintendent and the administrative staff. They told the teachers that efforts to organize and demand a greater role in this decision-making process threatened the autonomy of the school board. Moreover, they claimed that teachers were being manipulated by MEA representatives who dictated the actions and their sequence to the local association.

It was in the context of these developments that a sequence of organizational tensions within the school system came to a boiling point at the same time that the district was planning to put into action its four-year plan for educational innovations funded by the federal Experimental Schools program.

Shifts were beginning to occur in the balance of power as teachers sought to assert their professionalism. Recognizing a threat to their authority, school board members took steps to retain their power and dominant authority. The teachers were beginning to demand alterations in the organization which would lessen the ability of the school board to exercise their political power. The teachers saw advantages in coordinating their efforts with support offered by the Michigan Education Association, while the board viewed such coordination as a threat by an external agency to diminish local control.

CHAPTER FOUR.

A TEACHERS' STRIKE: SOME SHIFTS IN THE BALANCE OF POWER

The desire of teachers to improve their status as professionals is incompatible with the bureaucratic control of the schools sought by administrators and supported by the school board. Some teachers and most administrators and board members are likely to prefer a subordinate employee role for teachers, while most teachers will probably claim the rights and responsibilities of professionals. Conflict is likely to be produced from the incompatibilities of the expectancies associated with each status. Such conflict is not the result of incompatibility between organizational and individual needs. Rather, it results from a struggle between different parts of the organization. When confrontation occurs, the effects may include alterations in the relative status of the different groups, providing a different balance of power among them.

The Experimental Schools project was to begin during the 1973-74 school year. Implementation was affected, however, by an unexpected event which occurred on the opening day of school. On September 4, 1973, the teachers voted to strike. The action stemmed from dissatisfaction with teacher contract negotiations, which had been underway since spring. Although the strike lasted only one week, its effects were felt throughout the year by staff, administration and school board. The project was delayed. When the strike ended and school resumed, the project received far less attention than was originally planned.

The strike during the first week of school preoccupied all school employees and residents, and animosities were aroused which lingered throughout the year. A contract settlement was not reached until January 8, and its contents deepened the bitterness already felt by teachers toward the administration and school board. The conditions under which the Experimental Schools project began were not favorable.

The vote to "withhold services" constituted the first labor confrontation of any magnitude in the district. Of 77 teachers employed in the system, 71 voted to strike. Those casting affirmative voted included twelve teachers beginning their first year in Constantine. The six who opposed the strike included the wife of an elementary school principal, the wife of a school board member, a teacher near retirement who did not believe in the strike action, and three others who were not members of the Constantine Education Association (CEA).

The strike action produced shock waves among the administration and board members, and in the community. For the first time in the history of the district, residents were confronted with a delay in the opening of school. School employees and parents expressed concern about the future of the schools and the students.

BINDING FACT-FINDING: SOME UNEXPECTED DECISIONS

Teachers and school board agreed to be bound by the decisions of a binding fact-finder. An arbitrator was assigned by the Michigan Employees Relations Commission. He met in closed session with both groups during the autumn and produced a final decision in January 1974. He set the salary increase at 8.8 percent, slightly above the board's final offer, and

substantially lower than the teachers' final offer. He denied the teacher demand for changes in promotion policy. The board was ordered to continue with the MEA approved insurance policy for one year and then to seek competitive bids for successive years. The final determination also required released time for planning for elementary teachers. It gave the board continued authority to establish policies regarding payment for extra work in the Experimental Schools project.

Both sides regarded the arbitrator's decision as a victory for the school board. Salary had been an issue primarily because teachers were concerned about keeping abreast of increases in the cost of living. Salaries also provided them with an important measure of their professional worth and self-esteem. They sought the change in promotion procedures as a recognition of increased professionalism. They considered the arbitrator's determination to give the board decision making authority for compensation of extra duty pay for the Experimental Schools project as a defeat for professional self-determination. The arbitrator favored the board's position on those issues for which the teachers had fought hardest, to gain increased professional recognition. The issues which he conceded to the teachers were of lesser importance to them. Board members and administrators expressed surprise privately at the outcome. Teachers made no public expressions of disappointment, but among themselves they expressed bitter frustration.

There were many teacher strikes in Michigan and throughout the nation during the 1973-74 school year. Teachers were making collective demands for increases in salaries, changes in working conditions and the distribution of power. There were concerns about accountability systems which exacerbated relations between teachers and boards of education. These issues were

important in Constantine in 1973 and the conflict was aggravated by the introduction of the Experimental Schools project. To understand the implementation of that project, it is important to understand the strike and the conditions surrounding it.

TEACHER STRATEGY IN NEGOTIATIONS

Contract negotiations and the strike brought the teachers closer together than ever brfore. The CEA had existed for years as the representative organization for teachers but had never been effective in negotiations with the school board.

In 1973, the negotiating committee was led by two teachers who provided strong leadership. Under their direction, teacher complaints about employment conditions and salary were forged into a bargaining strategy. The group identity of the teachers intensified as they became aware of their potential as a unified bargaining group.

One experienced teacher described the change which occurred in the teachers' organization:

> In previous years this leadership has not occurred because of the strength of the administration. One of the most important things to come out of the strike was the inter-building working relationships that developed. There are more new friendships. The two leaders developed more leaders.

The president of the CEA was a history teacher, who was aware of past negotiating disappointments but saw growing militancy in the teaching profession. This knowledge combined with indignation stemming from past negotiating, made him ready, almost eager for battle. A fellow teacher in the high school described him as,

> ...a person who kept things stirred up. He saw all board members as anti-teacher.

Like the CEA president, its chief negotiator was a strong protagonist, but was more cautious in his concern with improving salary and benefits.

The CEA's negotiation strategy was not well organized. The major issues of salary, extra duty pay, released time for elementary teachers, and a decision-making role in the Experimental Schools project were clearly understood. Yet, their statements to the board and news media lacked consistency. Those who spoke for the organization made statements which were not precise and lack supporting evidence. The teachers were not sufficiently aware either of their own objectives or those stated by the school board. Some teachers conveyed the impression that this lack of organizational clarity was merely superficial, and was a ploy intended to "throw the board off balance." On several occasions, however, when board members challenged statements made by the teachers' association, the teachers were unable to defend them adequately.

The teachers' association took advantage of the school district's relationship with ES/Washington. That agency's project officer assigned to the Constantine project was contacted and informed of the strike. The president of the CEA assumed that the "Feds" would not permit a strike situation to continue because of the project contract. To him

> Many teachers felt that ES/Washington would not like a strike, and would force the school board and the superintendent to meet the teacher demands so as not to jeopardize the Experimental Schools project.[1]

However, there was no threat of reaction from the federal agency. Any concerns about the possible effects of the strike on the project were not communicated to Constantine.

The CEA leadership informed ES/Washington about the role of the project coordinator in the strike action. They contended the school board was using federal money improperly since the project coordinator had been chosen to deflect all incoming telephone calls to the superintendent and to issue statements to the news media. In this capacity he acted as a spokesperson for the school board and administration.

This charge against the school board and against the project coordinator received special attention because of the support the project coordinator had established with the teachers before the strike. Hired in October 1972, the teachers had begun to believe he was "different from the other administrators." His job responsibilities brought him into frequent contact with teachers involved in the project planning process during the 1972-73 school year. He frequently worked with teachers individually and had established rapport with many.

During the strike, however, he was assigned to speak for the administration and the board. He detailed charges against the teachers through statements to the news media about the illegality of the teachers' action and its consequences if the teachers did not return to work immediately. On the fifth day of the strike, he issued a press release to a local radio station which declared the board would soon begin a search for new teachers. It implied that all striking teachers would lose their jobs:

> If the illegal strike continues through the middle of next week, the Board of Education will launch a nation-wide search for teachers in an effort to open all schools by September 17.

Teachers were outraged by this threat. The antagonism became more sharply defined. Almost without exception, teachers were angered by the project coordinator's actions and he was thereafter looked on as part of the antagonistic group of administrators. His rapport with them was destroyed.

The CEA received support from the MEA and local teacher associations. A statewide bargaining strategy statement had been developed by a task force of the MEA in June 1973 to provide a uniform strategy for affiliated teacher groups to combat increasing organizational consolidation of school boards.

Assistance to the CEA from nearby local teacher groups and from the MEA consisted of small donations (e.g., $50 from one local) and the advice of several employees of the state organization who were specialists in particular concerns related to the contract negotiations and strike conditions. The teachers' negotiation team frequently included an advisor from the regional office of the MEA.

Teachers believed that the MEA advised against strikes by local affiliates with fewer than 100 members, and saw that as the primary reason the state organization gave minimal support to their strike effort. Most visits by MEA staff included only one regional or state office person, and there were no efforts to provide state office facilities for printing of materials. Most likely, however, the low level of support by the MEA was due to widespread strike activity at that time involving dozens of affiliates. The resources and personnel of the MEA were distributed to cover all of them.

As the opening day of the school year approached, teachers began to think more of the possibility of a strike. Until August, teachers had relied on their leaders to conduct negotiations while most of the membership remained relatively uninvolved. The leaders communicated with the membership, but they

did not develop an infrastructure to provide support services to members if a strike occurred. During the final week of August, the teachers developed a "telephone tree" to communicate with all members of the association. They provided up-to-date information about the negotiation conditions. On September 4, 1973, immediately following the decision by the teachers to "withhold services," the teachers' association established several committees to provide services to the members and to attempt to gain maximum support from the community and outside sources.

One committee was established to contact all substitute teachers in the area and urged them not to cooperate with the administration and school board. They correctly anticipated that the school board and administrators would ask substitutes to serve as interim teachers, thereby enabling the board to open schools.

Another committee exchanged information with sympathetic teacher organizations in the region. Representatives of the CEA contacted all teacher groups in nearby counties and the state association. They also coordinated interviews with the news media, including a national network television crew.

Additional committees were set up to establish "truth booths" to disseminate information about conditions which led to the strike, to cope with rumors, and to conduct a door-to-door campaign to discuss with residents the reasons for the action.

STRATEGY OF THE SCHOOL BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

The strategy of the board and the superintendent was focused on maintaining financial stability and decision-making control. Paternalistic dominance over the teachers' association had been characteristic of negotiations

for many years. School board members had always relied on their influential positions in the community and used this power effectively in negotiations with the teachers.

In these negotiations, however, both board members (and teachers) indicated determination not to back down from announced positions. Often, abusive language was used as a strategy of offensive thrusts to confuse or batter the other side and lessen their determination. Factual information about the projected school district budget was repeatedly requested by the teachers and just as frequently not provided by the school board and administration. Some other facts were obscured and diversionary tactics such as criticism of improper use of language by the teachers in their statements, were used.

One board member, who had made the most bluntly critical statements about teachers, said the board had decided not to meet teacher salary demands. To support this position, the board argued that there were insufficient funds to pay for a large salary increase, "even though we knew that was not true." However, he indicated that harsh statements he had made in negotiations were part of the strategy to weaken the teachers. He claimed he had no personal animosity, that his public statements were made to present the board's position and not his personal views.

> Statements I made in negotiations were made as spokesman for the board and were not necessarily my own opinions.

Board actions demonstrated its determination. Members made statements during negotiations which indicated their willingness to "go only so far" and they indicated in private conversations that they expected the teachers to make compromises before a settlement could be reached. They expected the teachers to concede rather than strike.

The board applied pressure to untenured teachers, informing them that they were in an especially precarious position and that participation in the strike threatened their job security. However, none of the teachers was persuaded to return to the school system.

When teachers attempted to use school facilities and materials to inform residents of their reasons for calling the strike, they were rebuffed by administrators. The teachers described the refusal as a "lockout." However, teachers had planned for such a possibility, and many had removed personal possessions from classrooms. Whether called a lockout or not, the teachers were effectively forbidden the use of school facilities during the strike. In one instance, teachers attempted to obtain a map of the district to be used to assign sections for the door-to-door campaign. The project coordinator informed the teachers it would take "a long time" to find the requested materials. In another instance, the superintendent ordered teachers to remove a "truth booth" they had established in front of his office at the high school.

The board and administration also obtained support from two churches. Before the strike, the teachers asked the Methodist minister for use of the church basement for meetings. He told them he could not allow them to use the church unless it was approved by a committee. He told them he was certain the request would be denied because two members of the board, the superintendent, and the elementary principal were active members of this church. The teachers then approached the Lutheran minister, who was new to the community. At first, he agreed to let them use the church basement. On the third day of the strike, however, the elementary principal met with the minister. Later that same day, he informed the teachers he would "be more comfortable" if they would meet elsewhere. The teachers could not

meet in the school buildings and were forced to find a new location in a community which had few meeting rooms large enough to accomodate their group. Unable to find another large meeting room, they held subsequent meetings in the basement of a teacher's home.

The school board and the administration also made effective use of the news media in notifying residents of the board's position. At one point, the teachers offered to return to school if the school board would agree to binding fact-finding. In a statement released to the news media, the superintendent explained that the school board had rejected this means of settlement,

> . . . because the Public Employees Relations Act which gives the teachers the right to bargain and makes strikes illegal also provided for fact-finding. The Michigan legislature passed this law without making it binding on either party.

In this statement, board members emphasized that they would not relinquish local control. They were willing to accept fact-finding, but not an arrnagement which bound both sides to the decision of an arbitrator.

Despite calling the strike illegal, the board did not seek a legal resolution through the courts. To have relied on the authority of the courts would have been an admission that the board's authority was not sufficient to compel compliance by the teachers. Moreover, a court resolution would have taken weeks, and the board knew the primary objective was to open schools as soon as possible.

The superintendent also declared that,

> the board agrees with the reasoning [of this act] and urges the teachers to return to work and negotiate further in good faith or to petition for fact-finding through the proper channels.

Board members were philosophically opposed to relinquishing any authority to make decisions--authority, which they believed rightfully belonged in

the hands of the elected representatives of the school district. They believed an agreement to abide by a ruling of a binding fact-finder would be a serious erosion of their authority. The strategy of the board throughout negotiations was focused on maintaining that decision-making authority.

The board attempted to demonstrate that their strategy was in the interest of the community. They portrayed themselves as representatives of the community, and claimed their actions represented community sentiment. Later events proved, however, that a majority of the community did not agree with their efforts to resolve that conflict.

BANKING ON BRINKMANSHIP

"Playing the game" was a recognized strategy of each of the negotiating teams. Board members considered themselves to be bargaining in "good faith," while the teachers "played the game." On the other hand, teachers maintained the board "played the game" by not bargaining in good faith during negotiations from April through August. Teachers believed that prior to the opening day of school, the board would produce a last-minute offer, anticipating that the teachers would feel compelled to accept.

Residents concurred that this was board strategy in previous years. Board members made an initial offer with minimal changes to the existing contract. Then, they would allow tensions to build during the summer. "Coming down to the wire," a few days before school began, they would make another offer with minor concessions. A community leader described his belief about this process of brinkmanship:

> I've heard that the board in previous years has been indifferent until the last few days before Labor Day, and then gets serious, offers the teachers a minimum package, and the teachers cave in and take it.

Teachers were thus maneuvered to accept the offer or a bargained position near it. This strategy of "brinkmanship" was successful in previous negotiations, but the strike vote on September 4 indicated it was not successful in 1973.

Other residents thought the personalities of particular board members had a disruptive effect on negotiations:

> I think that [a board member] and [another board member] present themselves as hard guys, and that this personality problem has an impact on negotiations. [Board member] wouldn't give anyone a penny more than he has to, and if someone would work for a dollar an hour, that's fine with him.

Some also indicated lack of confidence in the superintendent. One community leader said, "There has been trouble [over contract negotiations] at the school every year since he came."

Various tactics and devices were used in this organizational power struggle. Coercion led to opposing efforts to avoid being coerced. When resources for fighting back were not available and strong incentives for staying existed, compliance and passive resistance resulted. In previous years, the teachers did not have resources and organization to stand equal to the board. There were sufficient incentives for staying, including job security, commitment, and established residence. However, during the year preceding the strike, the teachers developed resources and organizational strength to match the coercive bargaining techniques of the board.

END OF THE STRIKE: A COMMUNITY DECISION

The strike lasted one week. It ended at a climactic school board meeting attended by most teachers and 500 residents of the community. Members of the board and administration had approached the meeting with

confidence; they anticipated a systematic presentation of the board's negotiating position, and believed residents would demand that the teachers return to school. However, events which took place did not match those expectations. The outcome was an acquiescence to the teachers' demand for binding fact-finding. Board members believed the majority of public sentiment was against the strike action and that the expression of that sentiment would force the teachers to return to school. That sequence of events did not occur. Residents accused the board members of stalling negotiations and urged them to make efforts to settle the dispute. They demanded to know why the board opposed binding fact-finding.

Those accusations caused a disruption in the orderly presentation. The board president then declared that the board was opposed to binding fact-finding for a one-year contract, but would consider it for a two-year pact. He was attempting to describe the board's ability to finance a similar salary demand in next year's negotiations. The board believed a two-year pact would permit averaging the increases to their advantage.

The teachers' chief negotiator took advantage of this moment, and announced to the audience that the teachers would accept, ". . . the board's offer of binding fact-finding for a two-year contract." There was immediate applause from the audience and frowns on the faces of board members.

The teachers left the meeting to hold a caucus. They voted to accept the two-year "offer." When this decision was announced, the board then moved to another room and reluctantly agreed to accept the terms. They returned to the meeting and, without debate, voted to accept binding fact-finding on the unresolved issues of salary and insurance carrier. The teachers agreed to return to school the following morning.

The unanticipated outcome of this meeting--brought on by persistent questioning by members of the audience--was a surprise to board members, administrators, and teachers because of the belief that most community residents would support the board. It was obvious that a significant reversal had occurred. Most observers believed the school board and administration had the upper hand at the beginning of the meeting. Most board members were firm in their determination not to compromise with the teachers. They had stated that they intended to terminate all striking teachers if they did not return to work. Teachers were worried that the board would carry out the threat. Some were thinking of breaking ranks to return to work. When the superintendent's convincing presentation was interrupted, however, the turn of events led to the unanticipated public decision and a victory for the teachers. The school board was displeased with the results, but felt compelled to accept the conditions or, as one member said, "lose the support of the people."

An indicator of community sentiment occurred in a meeting three nights earlier, attended by 40 teachers and 120 residents. Residents' statements during that meeting were mostly in support of the teachers' actions. A second indicator was a petition signed by 125 residents which urged the school board to reach a "fair agreement" with the teachers. The petition was intended to be non-partisan. The primary objective of most residents was the resumption of normal school operation. One of two mothers who circulated the petition stated that she was upset that "professional people with college educations permitted this strike to occur." She claimed the petition did not favor either group in the dispute, and was addressed to both. However, she believed the majority of petition supporters favored the teachers.

Although the teachers had more support than the board, most of it was not because of ideological or philosophical agreement with the teachers. Most residents opposed the disruption in the regular operation of school. They disliked the open conflict which disturbed the normal tranquility of the community. Some support for teachers occurred because of distrust and dislike of individual board members. Many residents also expressed doubt that the board was acting in the best interests of the school system or the residents.

Teachers were also criticized by residents. Some were angered by teacher salary demands which, by local standards, were above average. Others believed that many teachers did not warrant requested increases because they ". . . only work six hours a day and then they have the summer off." residents who opposed labor organizations were opposed to the concerted action by the teachers. Those who opposed the strike argued that teachers were in violation of the law, or some fundamental right. "It's a shame that school isn't open. Those teachers have no right to strike." Others worried about an increase in taxes if teachers received a substantial pay increase.

Many were surprised that there was support for both sides in the dispute. The CEA leadership worried before the strike that residents might provide only minimal support. The administration and school board also expected minimal support for the teachers from the community.

For a brief period, interest in school affairs had reached a new level. Discussions and disagreements among residents continued for weeks, but residents did not continue to take active interest in school manage-

ment. The conflict between teachers and the board had produced the largest crowd ever to attend a board meeting (only football and basketball games drew larger crowds). Yet, the next board meeting two weeks later was conducted without a single resident spectator. Normalcy had returned in that sense, at least. Although residents continued to debate the merits of the conflict on the street, none came to meetings of the board to observe the after-effects.

In an interview following the meeting, the president of the school board commented that he had wanted a settlement, but not the procedure through which it occurred:

> An open board meeting is no place for negotiating, but we had to do something to get some of these board members off-center.

A split had developed among the board members, and the president's action, intentional or not, maneuvered the hard-liners to a decision to end the strike.

Another board member stated that the board had been manipulated in the open forum to a position from which it could not retreat: "Some suspect that it was intended to present the board's position that way." He also said he was extremely upset by the outcome of the meeting because he felt the board's position had been well-prepared by the superintendent and the presentation convincing. He believed the board "had victory in sight," until attempts to answer questions from the floor regarding binding fact-finding led to the disruption in board strategy.

The timely statement by the teachers' chief negotiator, in which he accepted the president's "offer," sabotaged the intent to convince residents that the board should prevail. The same board member said he had wanted to ppose the president's suggestion, but added, "What can you do when someone has you by the balls?"

EFFECTS OF THE STRIKE

This first strike by the Constantine teachers had significant effects on the lives of those involved. Relationships between teachers and administrators and school board members were disrupted; the repercussions were felt by other employees and the pupils. Residents were involved because the disruption in the schools affected their children and friends. Social relations, ties to civic and social organizations, and everyday friendships were affected as boundaries were drawn between the conflicting parties.

Bitter Memories

The strike and the fact-finding process which followed during the next four months left many long-standing bitter memories. One and one-half years after the strike, a principal remarked on the continuance of bad feelings he saw between the school board and the teachers:

> One result of the strike has been the undying bitterness on the part of some and the short-term bitterness on the part of others. But teachers' respect for board members increased, and the board gained respect for teachers. Collective bargaining has always been bad. Three-fourths of the blame is on the board for wanting to pay less and in their having satisfaction knowing they can pay the teachers less. But the board finally realized that teachers cannot be dictated to because the teachers demonstrated this by intentionally waiting until August 15 to submit their salary package. But, teachers learned that the board is also strong.

Teachers were particularly angry with the actions of administrators during the strike and in the following months. One teacher with many years' service in the system summarized this anger:

> The superintendent lost some credibility by isolating himself in his office and not attempting to communicate with anyone [during the strike and in the weeks immediately following]. The project coordinator lost credibility because he became openly aligned with the school board

> position and because he was pushed into handing out press releases to the public. The elementary principal was subjected to much more insubordination from his teachers after the strike--especially in Riverside [Elementary School]--because of his hostility.

She said that, in negotiations, teachers expected board members to take opposing positions since they defined the interests of the board as conflicting with their own. But the teachers were outraged by the administrators' actions, aligning with the board and undercutting what the teachers saw as common professional interests in education.

The unanimity of the school board also was affected by the strike. The president of the board was unseated in the next election of board officers, a blunt message that some board members were angered by his performance during negotiations and his handling of the decisive board meeting. He served several terms as board president, and would traditionally have remained as president for as long as he chose to serve.

Among administrators, the strike settlement had a direct effect on their salaries. Because they supported the board policy of low percentage raises to teachers, they were likewise compelled to accept small raises. One principal complained of the paradoxical behavior of his fellow administrators: "They cut their own throats to keep teaching salaries low. This had a comparable effect on the amount of salary increase offered to us."

Other consequences arose from the protracted negotiations and strike. Teachers feared retribution from the administration and school board, and acknowledged that some teachers also sought revenge. As one teacher described it, "I don't know of anyone who is being pressured now, but there are people on both sides who would like to get revenge." Everyone knew that first-year teachers had been warned of their tenuous position

within the system. Administrators and board members disclaimed all charges of retribution. However, one effort to demote a teacher produced a confrontation and a decision rendered under public pressure.

In May 1974, the high school football coach was informed that he would be replaced as coach, although he would retain his teaching position. The board indicated that he was not automatically reappointed (as was custom) because of some "disciplinary problems" with football players. He had been one of the most active supporters of the strike and served as a member of the negotiating team. In this position, he directly confronted board members and administrators in negotiations. During the strike, he refused to conduct football team practice; it was conducted by the high school principal. Following football season, several charges were leveled against the coach by board members. The publicly discussed problem was the length of hair worn by some of the players, a violation of a code of conduct for athletes established by the school board.

The issue erupted at a board meeting attended by 30 residents; the first time residents had appeared at a board meeting since the previous September. All residents who attended the meeting supported the coach. Several accused the board of taking arbitrary action against a highly respected teacher.

Public expression of support for the coach was a surprise to board members. The football team's record during two previous seasons was less successful than usual: four wins and five losses in 1972, and six wins and three losses in 1973. Football fans in Constantine were accustomed to winning teams, often champions of the league. Board members believed the coach's popularity was lowered because of the records of the two seasons, but they underestimated community support for him. Following the public

expression of support, they agreed to meet with him in private and, later, rescinded their decision. He was reappointed football coach. In the following season, his team won the league championship and he was named regional coach of the year.

This event was significant because, for the second time in a year, residents had forced board members to act contrary to their personal view. Once again, board members were forced to concede that their preferred actions did not coincide with the interests of the public.

Teacher Solidarity

Following the strike settlement, hostilities were slow to diminish and changes occurred as the teachers and administrators adjusted to a factious environment. Teachers were less concerned with the long-range goals of the school system and more concerned with professional goals. The antagonism generated before and during the strike brought the teachers closer together. The group solidarity continued during the school year; it changed relationships with administrators and school board. There was decreased respect for the existing authority structure of the school system. Many teachers also expressed a lack of concern for the goals of the district, especially those of the Experimental Schools project. One teacher explained this as the lessening of a "sense of responsibility for curriculum-building and student services." Another teacher, disappointed by the continuing hostility, stated that she thought the most needed change was:

> a return to the cooperative spirit of the first few months of the planning of Experimental Schools in late 1972. Then the teachers were full of enthusiasm, and everyone was looking forward to doing great things. That has all soured now as the project has been implemented, and most especially because of the strike.

The project coordinator complained about changes in attitudes of the teaching staff. He said he noticed a more positive attitude in the early months of the planning year:

> I detected a definite degree of volunteerism among at least part of the teaching staff regarding the project. I think that still exists among some of the teachers, but I think the general trend over the past year has been away from the voluntary show toward a more distant, contractual arrangement wherein teachers are more likely to participate in the project on a contracted basis. This is especially evidenced in the negotiating for the new contract, when the teachers demanded compensation at fixed rates, while the board wanted to leave such determination at its own discretion.

He claimed the project suffered because teachers drew hourly compensation for extra duty even though they did not complete their assigned work for the project. In one instance, administrators complained about a teacher who refused to attend an in-service program because her paycheck for a previous in-service program was overdue because of a clerical delay in processing.

Negotiations for a new teachers' contract and the subsequent school year emphasized these changes in attitude among the teaching staff. Teachers were more likely to declare that an hour's work deserved an hour's pay, much as a wage-earner would argue for an hourly increase. The teachers also were moving toward a more completely contractual arrangement which would require them to produce nothing more than was specified in the group contract. This issue appeared to present a paradox in teacher demands. At the same time they were demanding recognition as professionals (for whom work is not usually compensated on an hourly basis), they were making demands for compensation for additional tasks required by the Esperimental Schools project as if they were hourly employees. The apparent paradox is resolved by considering that the teachers had not yet achieved recognition

as professionals and did not feel the autonomy of determining their own work standards. Consequently, their perceived lack of power to determine their own work commitments led to demands of compensation for any additional project-related work assigned by the administration.

Another manifestation of change in teacher loyalty was visible as they became less dependent on administrators for leadership in the school system. They developed a more militant consciousness of their own professional status. They showed significantly increased group solidarity before, during, and after the teachers' strike. One teacher said:

> Three years ago, the CEA was not strong. Until last year, teacher loyalty was to the school. Teachers took their problems to the principals. Since this summer, teachers now go to the CEA for problem-solving; the loyalty is now to the CEA.

Another teacher gave similar views:

> The most significant effect during the last six months has been the change by teachers from loyalty to the school to loyalty to MEA, due to poison pen letters and poor evaluation of a teacher because of a discipline incident in the school room.

The development of group identity was also evident in the distinct separation of administrators and teachers. Before the strike, most administrators identified teachers as part of "our staff." This expression indicated that administrators found common identity with teachers as educators and fellow workers within the school district. However, following the strike, there was frequent evidence of the growing division between teachers and administrators. Administrators referred to themselves as "we," and described teachers as "they." Teachers made similar in-group, out-group identification.

During the Experimental Schools planning year, teachers had increased their interest in planning improvements for the total school program. How-

ever, there was a peak of interest, in Spring 1973, after which the teachers did not continue working for improvements. The protracted negotiations and the strike increased their anger; they believed administrators and school board were giving themselves the entire credit for the quality of education in Constantine. Teachers believed they received no credit and were not permitted to contribute to the decision-making process. After the strike, they complained more frequently about their lack of decision-making power. And they gave themselves credit, not expecting nor wanting it from the administrators and board. A sense of responsibility for the schools returned, but independent of the authority of those other groups. One teacher said:

> In the first year, we had reached a point of saturation. Then, following the strike, most teachers were resentful about the lack of responsibility. But still later [1974-75 school year], most teachers seemed to have developed a sense of responsibility about curriculum-building and student services, independent of the administration.

Other teachers claimed this renewed sense of responsility was supported by their professionalism and obligation to the students, and was not related to the employee-employer contractual relationship.

School Elections

Other effects of the strike came in Spring 1974, in two school elections. On April 15, a new levy was approved by the voters of the district for a period of two years. By a vote of 263 to 209, voters in the district approved a two-year levy of $13.5 million for school operation to replace the previous levy of $12.5 million. The passage of this levy was especially significant because of a recent 30 percent increase in property valuation which angered residents more than any other issue in recent

memory. Most levies in Michigan were defeated by voters in 1973, in what appeared to be statewide interest in reducing costs of school operation.

In Constantine, the issue was complicated by the recent strike. Those favoring the tax increase were concerned by a strong possibility of its failure. Some residents were concerned that an increase in teacher salaries would lead to an increase in taxes. Although passage of the levy was considered a vote of confidence for the schools, the superintendent and board were reluctant to conduct an open campaign. Except for several newspaper articles, the only public statement about the levy was made by the superintendent at a meeting of the Rotary Club one week before the election.

Teachers were urged by the CEA leadership to campaign for passage. Most teachers did not make a significant effort. When it passed, however, they congratulated themselves for their role in influencing the vote.

On June 9, the voters went to the polls again, this time to elect two members to the school board. Two incumbents and four challengers were on the ballot. Many voters were dissatisfied with the incumbents, but the dissident vote split among the four challengers. With less than 50 percent of the vote, both incumbents were re-elected, although one had only a two-vote margin of victory.

SUMMARY

The strike had an impact far beyond the one-week delay in opening the schools. Relationships between teachers, school board, and administration were changed and the balance of power altered. The teachers realized they were a significant force when united under strong leadership.

Although they did not achieve all of their contract goals, they caused the school board and the community to recognize their long-standing dissatisfactions and their organizational strength.

The board won the salary issue but lost the larger battle. Board members had been determined to preserve what they labeled "social control" of the schools. They believed that principle was violated by the arbitrator who imposed a settlement on the two sides. The surprising turn of events at the school board meeting was to have long-term consequences. In any future negotiations, both sides would know that if they could not resolve their differences, an outside mediator was available. An important precedent was established.

The strike burst open a long-festering organizational conflict. Its origin was in the transformation of the school district from a small village district into one serving a larger and changing rural community. It occurred because of increasing professional militancy of teachers rebelling at paternalistic dominance by the school board. The introduction of the Experimental Schools project produced an additional threat to the teachers' struggle for professional recognition and improved status rewards.

These changes occurred as the community was becoming more integrated with mass society and inundated with the values and cultural symbolism of urbanism. In past years, Constantine managed to keep a school system based on familial paternalism, with casual blurring of the formal and informal patterns of rules and status impediments of the bureaucratic order. The strike signaled the beginning of the end of that era.

The organizational conflict gradually produced changes in the school system, and the strike caused a momentary quickening of the pattern of those changes. It is likely that if no strike had occurred, the same

configuration of changes would have taken place, although at a slower and less disruptive pace. The strike was not the fundamental factor in the change process, although it likely had some independent effects on the individuals involved and the school organization. The pattern of increasing bureaucratization and its accompanying increase in contractual forms of relationship was already evident in the schools. Efforts by the school board and administration to maintain the old form of authority based on the local control ideology was not successful. Despite a belief among many residents that vertical integration of the school system was to be avoided, the majority of residents did not see the intrusion by an arbitrator as a threat to that belief. There was more worry that elected leadership of the school system acted on behalf of personal interest rather than of community interest.

The strike revealed objective dimensions of the context of organizational conflict. It was an occasion for the occurrence of shifts in the balance of power among several interest groups in the school organization. It was a demonstration that a subordinate group, like the teachers, will relentlessly pursue those interests identified as most advantageous, even if political struggle is necessary.

CHAPTER FIVE.

IMPLEMENTING PLANNED CHANGE: FOUR YEARS OF COBBLING

Implementation of the Experimental Schools project was scheduled to begin September 4, 1973 with the opening of school. It was delayed by the week-long teachers' strike.

After the strike, school administrators began project implementation with components which could be started with minimal contact between administrators and teachers. Through the school year, members of both groups avoided unnecessary interactions. Teachers carried out functions related to the project with less enthusiasm than had been evident a year earlier. Administrators, attempting to avoid stirring up antagonisms, proceeded to implement the project components more cautiously than had been planned.

IMPLEMENTATION IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

In a climate of hostility, shown by both sides, the school district moved warily toward goals of changing and improving the schools, expanding curriculum and services available to students and community residents. During the early months, at the same time the employees and school board were engaged in a bitter and rancorous contract dispute, an effort was begun to give students an educational environment with humanizing concepts as its foundation.

Implementing humanizing concepts in the early months of the 1973-74 school year was considered impractical.

Highest priority went to individualizing the math and reading programs because only minimal staff training was required to put them into operation. These programs had been better planned and were heavily

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invested with new equipment and instructional materials. Teachers would not be required to modify classroom control patterns or spend extra-duty hours in additional planning. They would not be required to meet with administrators in additional circumstances, thereby decreasing the potential for antagonistic interaction.

The reading program provided individualized instruction, with a system designed by Random House Incorporated. Using new equipment and books, students received reading instruction in the classroom, supplemented by visits to the "Reading Lab."

Similarly, the math program was implemented with individualized instruction through use of the Individualized, Personalized, Instruction (IPI) program. Like the reading program, there was a laboratory facility with supplemental instruction by classroom teachers in grades three through eight. Instruction in other grades remained with the classroom teachers.

Other curricular components were implemented without the substantial commitment to individualized equipment and the choice to individualize or not remained with the teacher.

Some other project objectives were not so easily activated, however. Administrators and teachers did not modify classroom patterns for the humanizing goals. The wilderness program was designed as part of the humanizing concept; using a challenging obstacle course and campgrounds, it was intended to improve student self-concept. When the superintendent did not approve expenditures for essential equipment, implementation of this component was delayed until the second year. In the meantime, the component was assigned to the newly created guidance coordinator position. However, the superintendent did not employ anyone in this position until

the second year. The implementation of guidance counseling in the middle school and an expanded program in the high school were similarly delayed.

All parts of the project's plan which involved change in classroom control ideology, and which would have required cooperation among teachers and administrators to bring about the humanizing process, were shelved. The strain of the strike left teachers and administrators unwilling to tackle new challenges which required relinquishing familiar methods. There was willingness to take care of familiar school processes and only those changes which did not require significant modifications were begun.

Throughout the first implementation year the administration avoided group meetings with the faculty. No meetings with the high school staff (the most militant of the four school staffs), or with the complete staff of the district, were held to assess the project. The superintendent was resentful of the strike and remained isolated in his office, seldom speaking to teachers. The principals encountered difficulty in maintaining communications with teachers. The project coordinator discovered the depth of distrust which the teachers had for him. In his words, "1973-74 was a very tough year."

The teachers complained of the lack of communications from the superintendent regarding the project. One teacher said:

> Not once did the superintendent meet with the staff to assess Experimental Schools progress, give encouragement, ask questions, or provide any leadership in the development of programs.

Teachers believed the superintendent was no longer interested in the project and continued to be resentful about the strike. Never one to

permit open familiarity with teachers, the superintendent was even more isolated during that year. Teachers and principals were concerned about the effect of his reclusive behavior on staff morale. Although he did not discuss the subject, it was believed by some that he considered the unsuccessful negotiations and strike as a personal defeat and a discredit to his professional record.

By the end of the first year, the administration reported to ES/Washington that implementation had occurred in some portions of twelve of the major components of the project. That was qualified by a statement that many components were not yet successful and were only marginally operational. Some components were in continuing stages of planning in which students were not affected. Administrators felt compelled to present a picture of successful implementation in reports to ES/Washington. Rather than emphasize that the continuing conflict over contract negotiations caused the district to fall behind schedule, the administrators chose to give little significance to the problem and emphasized success. In reports and in public statements, the project coordinator described successes occurring in the project. His demonstrations, through a variety of data and reports, included: charts showing dates of implementation of components, appointment of teachers to complete quarterly progress reports, photographs of students using reading and math equipment, and financial accounting. Yet, in private conversations, he worried over the lack of progress and his inability to regain rapport with teachers. In addition to believing it necessary to demonstrate success to ES/Washington, the administrators also wanted to present a similar image to the school board and the residents. Reports to ES/Washington also served as a demonstration to board and residents that progress was being made. Money had been spent,

equipment purchased, reports written, and students were being exposed to new programs in math and reading as well as some efforts in other areas. Although no progress was made in humanizing, individualizing was only partially behind schedule. Curricular elements of the program were implemented even though little progress was made toward the major objectives of improving student attitudes and self-concept.

Selected teachers in each building were given release-time assignments. They were permitted to plan and develop additional curricular changes. Later, these teachers were called "teacher-coordinators." Each was responsible for coordinating efforts in a school for a specific curricular component. Each was also responsible for completing a report each quarter, which described progress and problems encountered.

At first, this part of the project caused teachers to suspect the motivations of the administrators. Although the teacher-coordinators had a reporting responsibility, they had no decision-making authority. Most teachers assigned this responsibility became recognized as the most knowledgeable person in the particular component. This development was termed "differentiated staffing" by the administrators although they were careful to point out that there was no additional authority in the position and no difference in status was accorded to the teachers.

CONCENTRATION OF AUTHORITY IN DECISION MAKING

Before the Constantine ES project began, administration of the schools was in the hands of the superintendent and three building principals. They presided over the four school buildings in the district and made all decisions with the approval of the school board.

The project established two additional administrative positions: the project coordinator, responsible for planning and implementation of the project; and the community school director, responsible for the adult evening program.

All six administrators, plus the guidance coordinator and the ES evaluator, conducted weekly meetings in the office of the superintendent. The meetings covered a wide range of issues, including: staffing changes, discipline of students, inter-scholastic athletics and planning and development of all ES components. Changes in the curriculum, textbooks and other educational materials were discussed before approval was sought from the school board. This administrative council, in effect, had the power to approve or deny changes requested by teachers. Although teachers could appeal directly to the school board, it was unlikely that the board would approve a teacher's request unless recommended by the administrators.

A contest for influence with the superintendent quickly developed as the three principals sought to reinforce their importance and to use every opportunity to demonstrate that "normal" operation of the schools as conducted by the principals should continue to have priority over ES functions. While the project coordinator spoke of the comprehensiveness and all-inclusive nature of the ES project, the principals attempted to subtly define the ES components as <u>additions</u> to their existing systems of operation. In contrast, the project coordinator defined the project as synonymous with the school curriculum and during the first year of implementation, began to eliminate the use of the name Experimental Schools. He wanted to retitle the entire project as "changes in curriculum." This interest in reducing the visibility of the project label was also to lessen hostility from the teachers and to reduce the potential for controversy among residents who might fear federal intervention.

Before the project was initiated, the three principals and the superintendent were described by one principal as "a tight group." The two senior principals believed that the project coordinator thought his own status was higher than that of the principals. On several occasions, the two senior principals were angered when he circumvented their authority by involving teachers in project activities after permission had been denied by the principals.

Most of the conflict between the principals and the project coordinator occurred during the first year of project implementation, and by the beginning of the second year, the elementary and high school principals believed they had regained control of their buildings. The project coordinator concentrated on the middle school and the middle school principal permitted him to do what he wanted. The high school principal observed:

> During the second year of implementation, the elementary principal and I were left alone to run our own programs. Out of that, the elementary principal and I gained more authority than either of us had expected. The superintendent usually rules in favor of us if there was a question with the project coordinator.

During the first year of implementation, the project coordinator enjoyed a unique status which reflected the special importance of the project. But by the second year, the principals were reasserting their close association with the superintendent and the project coordinator's influence subsequently was lessened. As the need for first-time decisions occurred less frequently, the project coordinator had fewer opportunities to initiate new ideas and components. His role became more involved with coordination of functions, maintenance and purchase of equipment, and writing quarterly reports to ES/Washington.

At the end of the third year of implementation the project coordinator was also assigned the task of directing the adult education program when the community school director resigned. The superintendent decided that his functions could be combined with those of the project coordinator who, by then, was viewed as less busy. This decision indicated (1) that neither of the two roles required a full-time effort, thereby revealing the lessened importance of the two positions, and (2) that the project coordinator had lost out in the competition with the principals for the favor of the superintendent. At the same time that he was having additional tasks added to his workload, his importance to the school system was diminishing. Meanwhile, the principals were gaining additional support in their claims that their workloads were too extensive. During the third and fourth (final) years of implementation the superintendent and the school board began discussions of ways to lessen those pressures.

The elementary principal was responsible for two schools located a mile apart. He spent one-half day in each. The middle school principal also served as the athletic director for the school district. Although he had assistance with this task, he frequently complained that he was unable to be a full-time principal so long as he had the extra responsibility. And the high school principal claimed that he needed an assistant principal to help with disciplinary problems and to assume administrative responsibility during periods of his absence.

By the end of the fourth year, the school board was convinced that some changes were necessary. They approved hiring a second elementary principal and discussed the hiring of an athletic director and an assistant high school principal. However, the second elementary principal

was not hired when they decided community support was lacking. The concern for economy prevailed. Several board members concluded that if the principals were no longer willing to handle these extra tasks, an appropriate proportion of their annual salaries should be deducted and applied to the salaries of those hired to assume the new positions.

Although the relative importance of the project coordinator position was short-lived, a concurrent recognition that more administrators were required to provide for all of the school system's functions began to grow among the superintendent and school board members by the end of the project.

The hierarchial structure of authority within the school system remained unchanged, however. All decisions continued to be made by the administrators with ultimate authority in the superintendent, who continued to exert his pre-eminence through the power of his position as well as through his commanding authoritative personal style. Nonetheless, because he usually communicated through the principals, that authority was questioned by the teachers because of lack of respect for the principals. Though he projected an image of impregnable and silent strength, his ability to lead the school district through the project was minimal. Teachers feared and respected his strength, but because he isolated himself, his was not a compelling presence.

LATER IMPLEMENTATION: PLUSES AND MINUSES

The second, third, and fourth years of project implementation can be characterized by (1) increased willingness of teachers, administrators, and school board to try new and different approaches, and (2) continuing inter-group conflict. After the project had been in operation for a year,

many of the components were evaluated locally as unsatisfactory. Based on those evaluations, many program modifications and deletions were made, including alteration and later elimination of the expensive individualized math program. This was the beginning of an increased willingness to drop existing innovation techniques as soon as administrators or teachers determined that they were not producing expected results. Just as quickly, new techniques were adopted.

The second and third years witnessed a slight diminishing of conflict between teachers and administrators and school board. The fourth year was marked by a level of hostility higher than during the first year. The inter-group conflict proved to be the major stumbling block to achieving project goals and contributed to rejection of the project by the community.

During the second implementation year, efforts were directed toward the humanizing component of the project. A guidance coordinator was hired and given responsibilities for developing and coordinating in-service programs "to help the teachers achieve a guidance approach to teaching." He was responsible for developing the wilderness program, and served as a half-time guidance counselor to 400 students in the middle school. He developed 36 hours of in-service training for teachers using consultants from two state universities and a firm from Detroit. Most of the teaching staff participated in the in-service program--they were paid extra to do so. The local evaluation reported that teachers were favorably impressed with the program, although some teachers sharply disagreed.

The high school science teacher, who had written the original application to ES/Washington and helped develop the project, was opposed to these efforts. He criticized teachers for not attempting to implement

the concept.

> The humanizing aspect has not been effective at all. The two or three workshops were not the right kind--having someone just to lecture to us. We have enough people and resources here in the system. We need some chances to interact among ourselves about some of the problems. The basic weakness of the whole program is that it was initiated and the ideas developed by a very small group of people. They didn't arise out of a consensus of the larger group . . . . The humanizing aspect is by far the most difficult part of Experimental Schools to implement. The amount of humanizing would be the same even if Experimental Schools had not come here, because some teachers are concerned about students as people; others are not. Those who are, will deal honestly and humanely with students with or without outside funding or programs.

He believed teachers needed to learn from each other to implement humanizing.

The humanizing efforts received a major setback when the guidance coordinator resigned at the end of the 1974-75 school year.

Resignation of two administrators also affected the program. At the end of the first year (1973-74), the middle school principal departed. He had been the most willing of the three principals to accept the project innovations within his school. At the end of the second year, the high school principal resigned to accept a position as superintendent of a nearby school district. He had opposed many project components, particularly humanizing. The principal of the two elementary schools actively sought jobs in other districts, but was not successful. Some elementary teachers were openly seditious and he was unwilling to make peace with strike leaders. Although he denied it, the superintendent was reported to be a "prime candidate" for a similar position in the largest district in St. Joseph County, at the end of the first year of implementation. He was not hired for that position and other administrators expressed relief that he would remain to lead the project. They worried

that the project would be eliminated if he resigned. Both replacement principals stated agreement with the objectives of the project.

The search for a new high school principal, prior to the third year of implementation, was an indication that things were not running smoothly. It was a frustrating experience for the superintendent and divided the school board over the final choice. In his search, the superintendent did not consider candidates from within the school system. He expected to find more qualified candidates among outsiders. However, he began the search late and eliminated many candidates because he thought they were "not suited to our way of doing things here."

Late in July, after the prime period for hiring had ended, it was evident that no qualified and satisfactory candidates were available. This is especially significant considering the potential drawing power of the principalship of a high school involved in the Experimental Schools program. Either highly qualified administrators were not attracted to the district, or they were eliminated from consideration.

The Experimental Schools project had demonstrable career advantage for Constantine administrators. The first high school principal acknowledged that his experiences with the project gave him an advantage over other candidates when he was hired as the superintendent of a nearby smaller district.

Realizing that the hour was late, the superintendent recommended three candidates from within the system to the board. Included were the project coordinator, the middle school principal, and a high school math teacher, who also served as the basketball coach. All three candidates were young men in their late 20s. They had worked in the system from one to three years. The board assumed responsibility for making the choice.

They relieved the superintendent from a difficult choice among three men he knew and worked with regularly.

Despite lengthly discussion, the board was unable to reach a unanimous decision, one of few occasions when a split occurred. Four members voted for the basketball coach and three for the project coordinator. The new principal was awarded a one-year contract, indicating the wariness of the board in hiring a person with no administrative experience. His popularity as a basketball coach and his credibility with students and teachers were important factors in his selection.

After a successful year in the job, the principal's contract was renewed for two years, indicating continued board confidence. A frustrating search for a new principal ended with success and the superintendent had not suffered loss of support from board members because of his inability to attract a principal from outside the system or his dependence on the board in making the final choice.

The guidance coordinator position was filled by a high school teacher, who recently completed a masters degree in counseling. He was directed to concentrate more time on counseling students since other humanizing elements of his job had been reduced by the superintendent. Efforts to reform teachers through in-service training were diminished. The superintendent was, according to other administrators, not willing to continue the high level of effort in humanizing which had been the goal of the departed guidance coordinator.

Despite project planning for humanizing, most new teachers were hired for their willingness to be "firm" on student discipline, rather than for a predisposition toward the "guidance approach to teaching." The new middle school principal sought to hire male teachers to replace

female teachers who departed because he believed that students needed more male role models and stronger discipline methods which, he hoped, male teachers would be likely to use.

Initial efforts by some teachers to use the guidance approach had resulted in reports of lessened classroom control and a "breakdown in discipline." Dismayed by the failure of humanizing one senior teacher blamed other teachers.

> Those teachers equated the guidance approach with no discipline. Actually, they were doing the kids a disservice, they did not understand that the guidance approach should be tied in with firm but supportive discipline.

Misunderstandings about the goals of the guidance approach led some teachers to create classroom environments without normative sanctions. Then, worried by loss of pupil control, some teachers and the principals abandoned the concept in favor of "firm discipline."

By the end of the second implementation year, the administration reported to ES/Washington that all components of the plan had been activated. Many had undergone substantial revisions during the two years, as teachers and administrators made continuing efforts to improve those found unsatisfactory. By the fourth implementation year (the final year of ES funding) many of the project components were evaluated locally as not satisfactory or not functional. Some were revised again, while others were dropped.

A few components were regarded as integrated parts of the school curriculum. However, in some cases the acceptability was limited to one or two school buildings and did not resemble the original component. The reading program no longer resembled the original component in the elementary buildings. It had been changed several times, by the principal,

by the project coordinator, and by the teachers who objected whenever the principal suggested a new change strategy. The teachers complained that every time the principal enrolled in another graduate-level course, or heard a lecture by a reading expert, he immediately accepted the expert's method to replace the current one. The reading program was changed each year in the elementary buildings and one year was changed twice. The math program had been abandoned after the first year, due to unsatisfactory results, shortages of materials from the supplier, and because it was not coordinated for the entire school system. The new middle school principal worked two years developing a plan for the math program to coordinate courses from elementary through high school. The penmanship component was abandoned, except in one elementary building where two teachers used it. The travel component was subjected to criticism from within the schools and by parents and residents. Nonetheless, it was still active at the end of the fourth year, although board members indicated that it would receive little funding in future years. The art programs were successful in some buildings due to the efforts of individual teachers.

Some components were not functioning at all. The careers component was discarded in the elementary schools and never started in the high school; by the fourth year, the project coordinator considered it a failure. The community and family life component was not supported enthusiastically; a course on personality development was dropped early and not until the final year was a course on family life offered to high school students. Even then, the course outline avoided direct reference to sex education; it was oriented to child rearing and family finance. The outdoor education component was not functioning, except for the wilderness program for sixth

graders. A proposed program on horticulture in the high school never started, despite a large expenditure for equipment, and some eager students.

There were two major successes. The early childhood program, with its mobile unit to identify and work with pre-kindergarden children with perceptual problems, was popular. The adult education program, offering high school completion and "enrichment courses," was regarded as successful although evening enrollment only reached 28 students during its most popular year.

The guidance program, despite a slow start, made some progress by the end of the fourth year. A guidance counselor began working in the middle school during the second year. During the fourth year, each high school teacher was assigned approximately 12 to 15 students and was expected to fulfill the role of educational advisor.

Despite the guidance counseling effort, the humanizing concept was considered a failure by most teachers, by the project coordinator, the staff evaluator, all three principals, some board members, parents, and most importantly, by students. Most frequently, the continuous tension between teachers and administrators, and between teachers and school board was blamed for this failure. Significantly, the superintendent consistently refused to discuss the Constantine ES project in terms of successes or failures, or to point out any single component as not successful. During an interview conducted in May 1977, however, he stated that tension between teachers, and the board and administrators had negative consequences for the humanizing concept.

There were complaints by teachers that other teachers were unable to comprehend the objectives of humanizing, or else, were unwilling to relinquish authoritarian control of the students.[1]

Most students were not aware of the goals of humanizing. They had never been involved in the planning, nor the in-service programs at which the teachers were expected to learn how to use the guidance approach to teaching. And they did not recognize the efforts of individual teachers as any different from what they had been led to expect from teachers; expectations formed from gossip passed between students.

Teachers who had never taken part in planning the project, especially those hired after the first year, were less informed about the project than their longer-tenured peers. Teachers hired during the last three years of the project knew little about its purposes and were seldom involved in the active components. Many newer teachers claimed to be using teaching techniques learned before they were hired. They felt little pressure from administrators, or desire, to adopt project techniques.

Teacher morale improved after the first months following the strike, although the basic adversary relationship between teachers and administrators continued. Decisions continued to be made by principals and especially the superintendent. Nonetheless, teachers were more willing to initiate changes without first securing administrative authority. Greater willingness to try new methods was accompanied by increased assertiveness by the teachers to preserve the autonomy of the classroom.

INSTABILITY AT NIE: A SOURCE OF WORRY

The progress of the Constantine ES project was primarily a result of local factors and interactions. However, the development of the National Institute of Education (ES/Washington parent agency), and its growth pains and funding difficulties with an unsympathetic Congress were observed closely by school personnel who believed the future of their

project might be affected.[2]

The formation of the federal agency (proposed in 1970 although not officially created until August 1972) occurred before the initial communication to Constantine in March 1972, about the Experimental Schools program. However, once the school district became involved in the program, there was continuous concern over progress of the agency and its funding difficulties. The superintendent and other administrators were aware of current developments through news media, educational information services, and through contacts with various educational and political figures within the state and in Washington.

Whenever contacted by the ES/Washington project officer or other staff, the superintendent and others attempted to glean news about the latest difficulties in NIE's efforts to become an established and respected federal agency. Annual budget appropriations and the transfers of personnel at NIE were considered to be important information. In March 1973, the agency asked Congress for a budget of $162 million for 1974, but was forced to make do with an allocation of $75 million. In 1974, NIE requested $134.5 million for 1975 and received only $70 million.

Constantine's administrators were frequently reassured by the ES/Washington project officer and his immediate superior that despite such difficulties, the commitment to their project would be maintained. Nonetheless, the NIE budget setbacks were a source of concern to the administrators and school board.

Following the second budget setback, the director of NIE resigned. During that same period, in mid-1974, other key resignations at the agency contributed to a sense of anxiety in Constantine.

In November 1974, the Experimental Schools program director was replaced and local concern reached a peak. He had helped create the program and he was respected for his keen perspective on what the program meant to the rural communities. His independence and assertiveness within NIE gave him an identity in Constantine as a maverick who would fight to protect the integrity of the Experimental Schools program from the Washington bureaucracy. Although considered unnecessarily critical of their project, Constantine's administrators believed he was friendly and influential. With his departure, the leadership of the Experimental Schools program was assumed by unknown and seemingly uncaring bureaucrats.

The departure of the original program director was accompanied by a reorganization of ES/Washington which eliminated the separate organizational structure, the federal program. Thereafter, the program was subsumed within the responsibilities of another section. The Constantine administrators worried that their support in Washington might be slowly choked off.

Support for Constantine was never cut off; only the fear existed, caused by the changes in Washington. Following the program director's removal, and the reorganization of the unit, other lower ranking members of the federal staff left the project, some were not replaced. The effect on the Constantine administrators was two-fold. First, since the departing staff members were not being replaced, they worried that the Experimental Schools program would be eliminated or decreased in importance. Administrators expressed concern that the status of the program might be reduced from that of an "important experiment in education" to an unavoidable liability to the agency. The second concern was that every person who had played a key role in the development of the

Experimental Schools program had departed, leaving the agency without staff with "a sense of the history of the program, or its goals." This worry was reflected in comments by the Constantine project coordinator that ES/Washington's replacement staff members did not know the original objectives or historical peculiarities of the school district.

The result of this uncertainty was increased caution by administrators in Constantine regarding their project. No project decisions were altered and no components were aborted because of unstable conditions in Washington. Nonetheless, anxiety led to cautiousness in decision making.

Although ES/Washington was able to maintain its financial commitment to Constantine, its interaction with the school system decreased during the last two years. Because of lessened contacts, Constantine administrators seldom had to prepare for visitors from the agency or deal with "helpful hints," during the last two years. This was in contrast to the first three years when agency representatives visited Constantine to observe and evaluate. The agency was able to exert less influence because there were fewer visits and phone calls. Administrators felt less pressured to accept or even acknowledge suggestions for improvements. During the final two years, the project approached the "hands-off" philosophy with which it had been conceptualized.

The "hands-off" policy was a goal which was only partially achieved during the first three years of the project. The first ES/Washington project officer sometimes pressured Constantine and at other times was not directive. Her ambivalent manner reflected the agency's uncertainty about how much freedom to permit rural school districts using federal funds. The agency wanted the school district to be able to

carry on without federal direction, but ES/Washington staffers were usually unable to refrain from offering "helpful hints" or making requirements that something be modified or rewritten "to satisfy the reviewers." The second and final ES/Washington project officer attempted to be more directive, which often led to antagonism with the superintendent. However, when the funds for visitations and phone calls were reduced, his ability to convey advice and suggestions was curtailed.

The lessened contact with the federal agency was a relief to Constantine's administrators, since the earlier subtle pressure from knowing the agency had to be satisfied had been reduced to insignificance.

HOW THE PROJECT LOOKED AT THE END

The primary objective of the project was to provide a changed educational environment which would encourage improved attitudes in students toward themselves and the schools. That objective, stated as five major tactics (goals) in the project plan, was a complete failure, according to some, while to others, it was only partially so. None, however, concluded that the school environment was improved over what existed prior to the project.

Teachers and administrators concurred that student attitudes were not significantly improved, and some claimed they were worse as a consequence of the hostile conditions within the schools.

When asked to discuss students, both teachers and administrators agreed that as a "gut feeling," not much changed. The high school principal complained that within the last two years he had noted the nearly complete absence of high achievement motivation.

> I don't see any all-American boys around here in the past couple of years, who are willing to work hard as students. Nobody has the desire to learn. They just want to get by.[3]

He claimed that low morale among teachers in the high school was probably a primary factor.

> Cynicism is everywhere; for the teachers it is overwhelming, and it has been transmitted to the students.

Frequent Changes of Components

Cynicism among teachers was not the only factor which inhibited improvement in student attitudes. Frequent changes in project components, particularly the reading and math programs, were criticized by teachers, administrators, board members and residents for causing confusion among students. Each year, the reading and math programs were substantially modified from the original plan, and what existed in the preceding year. Individualized instruction, through the reading and math programs, was found to be unsatisfactory almost from the beginning. At the end of the first year, project leaders made plans to modify each with a turn toward more traditional classroom methods. The modifications called for using reading and math labs as supplemental rather than primary instructional devices. However, by the end of the second year, the modifications were also found to be less than satisfactory. Teachers and administrators again tinkered with the design in an effort to find that magic solution which would help students enjoy reading more and raise averages on the state assessment testing program. So it went for each of the four years of the project--adjusting the balance between use of the reading and math "laboratories," complete with teacher specialist and aides, and teaching the subject in the classroom. Different theories were tried, workshops conducted by paid consultants, and different packaged programs and

textbooks were purchased.

By the end of the project, no one could say that all the effort had improved student reading and math skills. Certainly, the state assessment tests did not indicate improvement; test score averages were lower. Many were anguished by indications that all the changes had possibly done more damage than benefit. Some parents complained that their children were less interested in reading and math than before.

The elementary principal who was responsible for many of the modifications in the reading program, was distressed that reading scores on standardized tests had fallen during the five years. However, he blamed the project's main goals, stating his own hypothesis: "The more individualizing and humanizing attempted in a school, the lower will be the achievement scores." He confirmed that the reading program in the final year of the project was much different than what had been planned. He expressed disappointment with the math program, which gave him considerable problems in four years.

> I'm disappointed that IPI failed as a math program. We can't prove whether IPI helped achievement scores. But, economically, it was a drain because of aide salaries and the materials. It wasn't only the expense, or the employee relations problems; we all got tired. I got tired, the teacher coordinators got tired--tired of in-service, tired of the Experimental Schools programs. Even though the math program was a loss, I'm hopeful that reading and language arts will continue. They will as long as I'm here.

The project coordinator disagreed, however, and claimed the labs were basically a sound idea. He blamed the failure on the too frequent changes in the program and resistance of teachers.

> The problems are mainly technical or related to the attitudes of teachers. As teachers get used to individualizing and using the lab equipment, they are less willing to teach. But there have been too many changes. Reading scores can't go up without some consistency.

The new president of the school board expressed his disappointment that results of four years of modifying and changing the programs was reflected in lower standardized achievement tests scores. He claimed that too many changes prevented the programs from becoming stabilized. "We have jumped around too much in math and reading, til no one knows what works and what doesn't."

Some teachers were more critical, claiming that competing interests of the project coordinator, the elementary principal, the reading specialists, and some teachers, had produced a rapid succession of changes which had negative effects on the students. One fifth-grade teacher complained bitterly that the students were subjected to the experimental indulgences of the project leaders and the many changes had disrupted student learning.

> Since this whole thing began, we've had five different spelling books, and five different reading books, and I'm sitting here with the guinea pigs who've been through it and they're a mess!

Of course, frequent changes provoked anger among teachers, who were required annually to adjust to new textbooks and changes in teaching technique.

Not everyone agreed, however, that the reading and math programs were failures, or that all the experimentation and modification of the basic plans had negative effects. The superintendent considered the reading and math programs to be strong and consistent parts of the project. He claimed that achievement scores did not tell the entire story of progress in these components. He was supported by the middle school principal who redesigned the math program and believed the reading and math programs were "strong points in the project."

The reading and math components were only two of thirteen curricular components, although they were the most heavily invested with time and money. They underwent continuous and drastic modification during the project, only to be judged as failures by most at the end of five years. They were the primary symbols of individualizing and curricular innovation. They represented two of the "three R's" of basic education, and because of the significance attached to achievement test scores, they were important measures of the district's success or lack thereof.

Some components met with partial success, including art in the high school and music in the elementary buildings. The keys to success of those elements were the interest of teachers in implementing them and the relative freedom teachers had from the administrators. The high school art teacher and the elementary music teacher each had strong ideas about how to initiate changes and insisted on the freedom to carry them out. Moreover, art and music curricula are not measured in terms of standardized testing. They do not have the significant importance to the evaluation of the schools which is attached to reading, math, and other academic subjects. Therefore, they were less important to administrators concerned with how well the schools do on standardized evaluations. Left alone, the teachers felt free to innovate, and their programs succeeded. The project coordinator claimed that the personal convictions and energies of the two teachers were the keys to success of this component. It is significant that the art program in the high school and the music program in the elementary were implemented and continued with only slight changes to the original plan. For these components there was little competition among different interest groups over the methods and the subjects. Teachers planned the innovations and carried them out.

Administrators and other teachers did not challenge them with competing methods.

A Return to the Basics

The profusion of changes in curriculum and the concurrent lack of successes in the project prompted some to take the initiative and return to a simpler style of teaching. One elementary teacher claimed that the multitude of changes in the various components stemmed from a too-willing acceptance of alternative and conflicting principles and theories, which he had rejected.

> There are too many conflicting theories of how to teach. All of them present sound and logical reasons. But there is a large gap between theory and practice, and the practitioners don't know what to choose. It's all too confusing. I'm not currently relying on Experimental Schools concepts, nor much on my training while in college. Rather, I find I've gone back mostly to common sense. . . . We're being fed a lot of psychology. Education is being fed a lot of ideas like Dr. Spock fed to the mothers. We're afraid to make a move without considering whether we are doing something wrong to the kids. I think this indecisiveness and confusion of theories may be doing some damage to the kids. As for the project here, I think we are much more confused about how to improve education than when we started. We don't know which way to go. We have so many in-service workshops. No one can make up his mind.

Another teacher was not opposed to the innovations of the project, but felt that the competition between different individuals and groups led to their rejection because of the conflict produced. She believed that, to resolve the tension resulting from too many competing ideas and methods, many teachers were reverting to methods used before the project was begun.

> This year [1977], rather than carrying through with what was good from Experimental Schools, we have reverted, we have dropped everything for a return to what the school was like before the planning year.

Not all teachers had returned "to the basics," but there was recognition by many that it was not limited to a few teachers, and that

most teachers were using a teaching style related more to personal choice than to influences of the project.

The Failure of Humanizing

The humanizing elements of the project were considered at least a partial failure by all concerned. Even the superintendent, always a staunch defender of the project, admitted that hostility among teachers, administrators and board members had a damaging effect. He claimed that concepts promoted through in-service workshops had not permeated the classroom; teachers did not utilize what was emphasized in the workshops. His reluctance to call humanizing a complete failure is contrasted with the opinion of the high school science teacher, who laid the foundations for the project, and now saw the humanizing component as a complete failure:

> It failed because of the continuous battle between teachers and the board. It failed because of lack of encouragement and leadership from the administration. It failed because of the workshops which forced teachers to be unwilling receivers of useless concepts. And it failed because some teachers did not understand, and probably never will understand, what humanizing is all about. Those teachers thought humanizing meant eliminating discipline and control in the classroom. Thus, when they let students run amuck, they blamed it on humanizing. Hell, students need some structure in school. Humanizing doesn't mean lack of structure and discipline. But those teachers couldn't figure that out. Then, when it didn't work for them, they could say it was a failure and return to their old ways of doing things, satisfied that they had tried. No, our project would have required more effort and cooperation to convince some of those teachers that humanizing was worthwhile and could work. But we didn't get any help from the superintendent.

Most teachers saw humanizing as a failure; the in-service was disliked and thought to be useless. There was no transfer of the concepts to the classroom. Some administrators viewed the in-service as

a success, and claimed that teachers were unreasonable in not attempting to apply the concepts to their students. The local evaluation statistics revealed that attendance at workshops was over ninety percent, and questionnaires filled out by teachers at the end of each workshop tallied up a positive rating. But teachers consistently claimed that while some of the workshops were interesting, there was no potential for application of the concepts to classroom interaction with students.

One element of humanizing considered a success was the wilderness camping experience to help sixth-grade students achieve an improved "self-concept." The project coordinator credited the success of this element to the teacher and the guidance coordinator who were in charge.

> Those programs which were successful were dependent on the people primarily involved in setting them up and making them function. The wilderness-camping program worked because the first guidance coordinator and the middle school teacher devoted considerable energies and enthusiasm to them and they were given the opportunity to make it work--away from the school. The wilderness program was good for Constantine but I fear it will deteriorate after [federal] funding ceases.

Like the art and music elements, the teachers doing the actual innovating were relieved of the pressure to succeed which existed for academic subjects. Additionally, they were free from direct supervision of the administration while away from school. Humanizing succeeded only in those instances where individual teachers accepted the concept as part of their personal philosophy of teaching and were not hindered by continuous contact with the organizational strife in the schools.

A Problem with Leadership

By the third year of implementation, many teachers claimed they were no longer using the concepts and materials of the project. When the fourth year ended, even more teachers claimed they used the concepts

only occasionally or not at all. Many blamed the school administrators for not providing effective leadership. For the first three years, until he resigned, the high school principal was widely regarded as opposed to humanizing and he readily acknowledged his dislike for many of the individualizing components. Some elementary teachers refused to use ideas which were proposed by the elementary principal; they were openly seditious. The principal resigned after the final year of the project. Some teachers were angry with the project coordinator for his lack of enthusiasm and concern for their problems. Some teachers also cited a lack of leadership by the superintendent as a primary reason why some components were not used in the classroom. One teacher stated:

> The superintendent let us all down, especially those who were involved from the very beginning. He didn't do a damn thing to encourage, show leadership, or do anything. If he isn't interested, why should anyone else be?

There was recognition that the superintendent was a skillful budget administrator, but most teachers feared the superintendent's reputed style of secretive and manipulative dealing with subordinates. It was widely believed that the superintendent continued to be resentful over the strike, which kept him from providing effective leadership to the project. One teacher said:

> He is so damn good at manipulating funds and people that you don't know what he is up to. He shows one side of himself and conceals another. He still thinks teachers are responsible for the strike and the subsequent failure of Experimental Schools, and has been bitter and holding out since then.

Some residents accused the superintendent of not exerting his role as leader to lessen the hostilities. Others praised his fiscal management and expressed less concern for the continuation of the project.

Because he cultivated his role to separate himself from the problems of individual schools and persons, he was able to divert many criticisms of the project by residents. He had established an office for the project coordinator, which created an identity for the project leadership separate from regular functions of the superintendent of schools. Nonetheless, all policy decisions were made by the superintendent. He created a system in which he had overall responsibility for the project, but with direct management conducted in a separate office by the coordinator. The arrangement left many residents uncertain as to who was really in charge of the project.

The superintendent of schools was in a position of high vulnerability, with built-in conflict (and power) where others demanded a high degree of decisiveness and clarity in his decision making and leadership. Appointed by the school board, he was especially susceptible to criticism for his actions, or inactions. In this planned innovation, he was the initiating force and others continued to look to him for leadership, especially since he was a decisive actor in other aspects of school leadership. He was looked to as the principal change agent. His delegation of authority for the project, to the principals and the project coordinator, created a dispersal of leadership and a struggle among those administrators which confused teachers and residents.

The superintendent chose to keep the administrative staff relatively small for the size of the district producing role overload[4] for the administrators. During the project years, the teaching staff averaged over 80, with only five administrators; the superintendent, three principals and the project coordinator (plus the adult education coordinator who remained in the district only two years). All three principals

complained of being overworked and of not having sufficient time to devote to Experimental Schools components. The project coordinator might have been the most effective change agent, except that his effectiveness and enthusiasm were significantly reduced by teacher distrust following the strike.[5] Later, when he did not overcome their distrust, teachers accused him of indolence and lack of interest.

During the final two years of the project, the project coordinator was in less frequent contact with teachers. Convinced that he no longer was interested in what happened to the components, many teachers claimed to have lost interest and to have reverted to other or more familiar techniques. The project coordinator was blamed for "showing his true colors" during the 1973 strike; and he was accused in successive years of being more concerned with maintaining good personal standing with the superintendent and the school board than with promoting and motivating the project. Originally viewed by teachers as someone who could bring about significant changes favored by the teachers, the coordinator was later identified as "just another administrator."

Because he came to the community to assume the job of project coordinator, he was viewed with skepticism by many residents who were unsure of his relationship to the project. It was known that he was an administrator in the schools but the exact nature of his duties was not clearly understood by residents, who were more familiar with the positions of principal and superintendent.

The project coordinator did not become involved in community projects or attempt to develop a public image until the final year. Greater public recognition would have given him access to residents and made him a more familiar figure. Not aware of the responsibilities of his

job, some residents worried that his position was an extravagance which the district might have avoided. This lack of public recognition was described by some residents as a partial explanation for the low level of community awareness and interest in the project. The project coordinator agreed. During the final year of the project, he became more involved in community projects and gained wider recognition. However, community enthusiasm for the project had dwindled to a low level by this time and his efforts at this time did not create greater interest or recognition for the project.

The school board continuously monitored the project through formal meetings and with a variety of contacts with administrators. Individual board members occasionally stated dissatisfaction with the lack of progress of a particular component, but no official actions were ever taken as a consequence of such complaints during the five years. Dissatisfaction was expressed most often with the performance of the project coordinator and less frequently with the principals. Board members did not publicly complain about the superintendent; that matter was too serious for public discussion. Moreover, some board members were continuously supportive of the superintendent. For other board members to complain of his performance would be to risk dissension within the board, and give notice to a powerful superintendent that his support was not unanimous. Consequently, those board members who were not completely satisfied with the superintendent's performance were unwilling to express those sentiments publicly.

The superintendent was appointed to his position by the board. No outside agency exercised any control in his selection or retention.

Because there was unabated antagonism between teachers and board, board members found justification in the conflict to continuously support the superintendent and project coordinator, blame the lack of success on the teachers, and ignore teacher complaints about poor leadership.

The Lack of Support by Teachers

Complaints about teachers not taking an active or enthusiastic role in the project were less frequent for several reasons. First, administrators made fewer complaints to outsiders because they attempted to preserve a view of the school district as not disrupted by conflict. To complain to the public would have given more information to the residents that all was not well within the schools. Administrators did not want to admit to having "lost control" of the teachers. Nonetheless, among themselves, they complained of non-cooperation from teachers.

Similarly, members of the board refrained from publicly criticizing the unwillingness of teachers to submit to their authority. Some members believed that to openly discuss the difficulties of sustaining the project would have negative repercussions in the community. There was an attitude of attempting to "keep family problems within the family," in the words of one board member.

Some complaints about the lack of cooperation from teachers came from their peers. Not all teachers were unwilling to support the project, especially the teacher-coordinators. They were involved with the project in a reporting capacity as well as in teaching. The lack of interest by their peers gradually eroded their own enthusiasm, however. By the end of the project, even they admitted to using their own components only as

a supplement to their regular duties. As one teacher-coordinator said:

> I tried to maintain the penmanship program until last year (1974-75) but no one else in the building seemed to be using it except for [a teacher] and [a teacher]. I've used it in my classes, too, but as a system-wide program, I don't think it will survive. Actually, I only use it part-time, not as much as I used it last year. It's a shame, we put so much into this. Now most teachers in this building have gone back to doing what they want to do without regard to Experimental Schools.

STAFF DISSENSION: THE PREPONDERANT PROBLEM

A larger than usual number of resignations by teachers and administrators at the end of the project was one result of staff dissension. Elementary teachers were openly hostile toward their principal; some claimed they resigned because they would not continue to work in the same building with him. Others threatened to resign unless the principal did so; he waited until late summer before submitting his resignation. Frustration over the lack of leadership from the superintendent and project coordinator was expressed by some teachers. They were angry that the project had been allowed to deteriorate and fail. The project coordinator's position was terminated by the ending of federal funds. He was not offered another position.

The administrators were subjected to scrutiny in performance of their jobs by teachers, students and residents. A position of responsibility permits those in authority to manage and make decisions, but it requires maintaining the confidence of subordinates. The administrators in Constantine were intensely criticized by teachers during the Experimental Schools project and frequently blamed by them for its failure.

Following the strike, teachers in the high school complained more frequently about their principal and did not discourage widespread dislike and contempt from the students. The second ES/Washington project officer informed the superintendent of his belief that the humanizing goals of the project would surely fail unless some corrective measures were taken by the superintendent and his principals. He had interviewed high school students during a visit in October 1974, and was informed of the general student dislike and distrust of the principal. Based on this information, he suggested that the then current high school principal was a deterrent to humanizing.

This high school principal, who served during the first two years of implementation of the project, was widely disliked by students who believed he could not be trusted and was an arbitrary disciplinarian. Many teachers shared this distrust and believed he treated teachers and students inequitably. Occasionally, parents angered by alleged unjust treatment of a son or daughter would protest to the superintendent and demand the replacement of the principal. No action was ever taken against the principal, however, and he enjoyed a congenial working and social relationship with the superintendent. At the end of the second project year, however, he left the district to assume a position as superintendent of a smaller school system in a neighboring county.

The elementary teachers and some parents similarly held a strong dislike for the elementary principal. During the Experimental Schools project years the elementary teachers became progressively more unwilling to openly show disdain for their principal. They frequently complained that his presence in their classrooms was particularly unnerving when he conducted visits to evaluate teacher performance. Teachers complained

that his standards for evaluation were not based on objective criteria, but rather on personal characteristics and the extent to which the teachers maintained a traditional approach to discipline and classroom organization. They also complained that he was inconsistent in encouraging them to try different teaching methods.

The elementary principal did not hide his resentment of the teachers' strike and he identified as "negatives" those teachers who had been active in the negotiations and strike activities. He reserved the label of "positives" for those few teachers who either did not support the strike, or following the strike did not oppose his policies. He remained with the school district through the final year of the project. During that final year, teacher opposition increased to widespread antagonism and hostility. He wrote an evaluation of a teacher giving her a poor rating, and included critical comments about her participation in the just-concluded negotiations for a teacher contract covering 1977-78 and 1978-79. The CEA filed suit against the school system for this alleged violation. The school board was unwilling to retract the evaluation report since the principal had taken the usual action of seeking its prior review and approval by the superintendent. However, two months later, just before the case was scheduled in court, the board conceded and agreed to withdraw the evaluation from her file.

At a school board meeting in May 1977, the president of the CEA requested a closed meeting to discuss teacher grievances against the principal. The teachers presented a petition signed by less than half of the elementary teachers. Although nearly unanimous in agreement that the principal was a primary cause of poor morale among teachers, the majority of his teachers chose not to sign the petition for various

reasons--most frequently, fear of retaliation. One teacher stated, in reference to the performance evaluation, "I won't sign for fear that I'd become a target next year." Another teacher stated that she had not personally been hurt, and although she felt sympathy for those who had, she would not take part in the growing effort to oust the principal.

> I just smile, grit my teeth, close my door and teach the way I want to . . . I'm not a fighter; I wish I had more backbone, but the world has all kinds of people, and I'm just one of those unwilling to fight.

Despite changes in recent years, many teachers still recognized the superior power of the administration to affect their professional futures.

School board members sought to offer support for the principal, claiming he was overworked, having responsibility for two elementary schools with a total of over 700 pupils. One member claimed that teachers were overlooking their own shortcomings and placing the blame for resulting failures on the principal. The teachers countered that the principal was not overworked but merely lacking in competence to handle the task.

By Spring 1977, some elementary teachers were militantly plotting to have the principal ousted. They formed a covert committee which initiated the petition, attempted to enlist other teachers in their mission, and encouraged teachers to be uncooperative with the principal.

Even those teachers who did not share the committee's tactics expressed despair that teacher morale in both elementary schools was very low. There was near-total breakdown in communications and trust between principal and teachers.

> There is a real lack of understanding. He [the principal] seems out of contact; he doesn't know what teachers are doing.

Elementary teacher loyalty to the school district was weakened and ceased entirely for the principal. "The issue began to snowball," said

a teacher. "The more authoritarian-like he behaved, the more teachers worked against him." Residents of the district learned of the problem in the elementary schools; it became a widely known dilemma and they waited in expectation of action by the school board.

During its regular meeting on May 11, 1977, the board approved salary raises for the superintendent and the two other principals: they delayed a decision on the elementary principal's salary. At a meeting on May 25, 1977, the board approved a plan to hire a second elementary principal and recommended no change in the current principal's salary for the next year. Despite this message of lukewarm support, the elementary principal stated his determination to stay. However, he searched for other employment. In late summer he resigned and was replaced by the teacher who had served as project evaluator.

Resignations of school staff reflected disenchantment brought on by the conflict and threatened the potential for continuity of the innovation efforts. Teacher resignations in 1977 occurred at double the average annual turnover rate; fourteen teachers resigned or requested leaves of absence at the end of the fifth year of the project, including two maternity leaves. Another teacher's contract was not renewed because of unsatisfactory performance. Several additional teachers in the elementary schools threatened resignation if the principal was retained. Significantly, the high school science teacher, who was instrumental in developing the project plans, resigned his teaching position after nineteen years. He claimed to be "frustrated with the failure of the Experimental Schools project and completely fed up with the abuse and lack of respect shown to teachers by the school board." He had been active in several components of the project as well as responsible for

maintaining the outdoor laboratory. And he had been active as a leader of the teachers during contract negotiations in recent years. More than any other person in the schools, his departure signaled the probable demise of the Experimental Schools concept. Among the administrators who began the project, only the superintendent remained to continue the concept after funding ceased. The final departures of administrators occurred at the end of the project with the resignations of the elementary principal and the project coordinator.

The federal funding ceased June 30, 1977, ending a five year project during which the Constantine schools received $901,000 in federal funds. The end of the funding should have found the school district ready to absorb project components using local funds.[6]

REJECTION BY THE COMMUNITY

For most residents, the schools seemed to be offering the same program to their children as before the federal funding, but it was costing more money. The program was the same, but the operation of the schools had changed. There were more teachers, administrators, and other staff than before. Salaries were increasing and the school board planned to hire a second elementary principal when many felt the first was not doing a satisfactory job. There was more money being spent for equipment, travel, and expert consultants. Finally, there was a plan to build a new middle school and the board had never gone to the voters to ask whether they approved.

In Constantine, there was an important symbolic difference between a grant of federal funds and those school funds derived from the property taxes of individual citizens. The latter is far more

meaningful to the individual, and is to be spent with greater concern for efficiency and utility.

The residents had expressed dissatisfaction with the operation of the schools each time the conflict between teachers and school board burst into the open. The strike in 1973 brought 500 residents to a school board meeting to demand that the two sides settle their differences. The attempt to dismiss a popular football coach brought another angry crowd to a board meeting to force a reversal from the board. Protracted negotiations between teachers and the board in 1976 and 1977 produced a crowd of 700 angry residents at a board meeting in January 1977. They demanded a settlement and the school board and teachers complied.

The most serious expression of dissatisfaction with the operation of the schools came in May 1977 with the rejection of a special school tax levy requested by the school board. The voters rejected that request for a 1.75 mill increase on two occasions by significant two-to-one margins. The rejections had a special importance when compared with the previous levy increase election, the history of frugal school operation, and the lowest tax rate of any district in the region. The previous levy increase of one mill had been approved by the voters in 1974, despite widespread outrage over a 30 percent increase in property valuations. Moreover, the teachers' strike had occurred only a half year earlier. Because of these facts, the rejection by the voters in May 1977 carried a special message. Most previous levy elections passed because of continued confidence in efficient operation of the district. For that reason, many who observed the 1977 election concluded that the voters' overwhelming rejection of the levy increase was a reaction to

the conflict between board and teachers, and to the less than satisfactory results of the Experimental Schools project.

SUMMARY

The project began with a year of planning during which the initial enthusiasm was dampened by increasing concern of the teachers that they were not participating fully in the planning and decision making. If they were asked to give more because of Experimental Schools, they wanted to participate in those decisions. In that first year, community involvement in decision making came to an end also. Planning for individualizing and other curricular modifications received greater interest from teachers and administration, while the humanizing was less well planned. Both teachers and administrators were more comfortable with the technical requirements of individualizing, while less secure in confronting the less understood concept of humanizing.

The beginning of implementation coincided with a strike by teachers which accentuated the rift between teachers and the school board. Because the administrators were aligned with the board, the hostility created a gap between teachers and administrators as well. The beginning of the project was affected. The individualizing effort was begun with the reading and math programs. Several other curricular offerings were also started. The humanizing elements were delayed until the second year, because of difficulty in attempting to implement programs involving interpersonal interactions and trust between administrators and teachers.

During the second implementation year a guidance coordinator was hired and the first significant efforts made to begin the humanizing

elements with a series of in-service workshops for teachers and other staff members. This effort received a setback when the guidance coordinator resigned after one year and the superintendent decided to lessen the overall project's emphasis on humanizing. Despite recognition of the humanizing objectives, most new teachers were hired because of potential for "firm discipline" rather than interest in the guidance approach to teaching. Many teachers also rejected the humanizing concept, either as a threat to their status or because they feared a loss of classroom control.

At the end of the project, most staff and residents concluded that student attitudes had not improved, achievement in academic subjects had not increased, and no improvement in career preparation had occurred. Changes had occurred within the school organization, however. Teachers were more likely to deny the authority of administrators and attempt to assert their own change efforts. There was competition between project coordinator and principals and ambiguity about leadership of the program. Directives were countered by other directives. Teachers saw the conflict of leadership and instituted their own changes. One result was greater willingness to try new approaches at the first indication that a current method was not being effective.

The individualizing programs for the math and reading components had been abandoned and those components had been subjected to frequent revision. Many other curricular elements were either not operating or were in use by only a few teachers. Most teachers claimed to have returned to techniques used prior to the beginning of the project, or to what they had learned during their professional training. Some claimed to have returned to the "basics," a reliance on common sense in

teaching. A few successes occurred in art and music, the prekindergarten, and adult education programs. All of these programs were in areas where the individual teachers were credited with taking the initiative, and were relatively unhampered by administrators and conflicting plans. The pressure to show success, evident in reading and math, was not as much of a factor in these programs.

Humanizing was regarded as a failure by most staff and residents. Administrators blamed teachers for not applying the concepts taught during in-service workshops. Teachers blamed each other for reluctance to accept the challenges of humanizing. They blamed administrators for not providing effective leadership and not recognizing the teachers' professional skills. Both groups recognized the on-going strife between teachers and the school board, and the antagonism and distrust which characterized relationships between teachers and administrators. They were crucial factors in the failure of humanizing.

The project had started with the intention of converting the educational process from authoritarian to egalitarian relationships. After a brief and unsuccessful effort, most teachers and administrators returned to the more familiar habits of the past. Authoritarian control in the classroom and in relationships between the various interest groups in the schools returned.

This chapter has presented a discussion of institutional barriers to planned change. Several consequences resulted, including the following unresolved conditions of organizational conflict. First, the failure to involve teachers and residents as participants in decision making was caused by reluctance of administrators and school board to relinquish their control of the school system. The project was rejected

by some teachers who feared they would have no control in directing the project, although it made additional demands on their teaching skills. Residents were not involved and consequently were never convinced of the importance of the project to the schools.

Second, the perceived threat of less control in the classroom and in the operation of the schools caused some teachers and administrators to give only inconsistent and weak support to humanizing efforts. Third, hostility left over from the strike and its aftermath prevented teachers and administrators from cooperating to achieve project objectives. Lukewarm leadership from administrators was matched by reluctant compliance, when necessary, by teachers. Finally, the hostility led to frequent replacement of project components at the first sign of failure as administrators and teachers sought to gain control over what was taught in the classroom.

There were frequent attempts to repair the project; a search in hope of finding an elusive combination of elements which would make the project whole and functioning. Alas, there were too many cobblers and each change in the patchwork proved no more satisfactory than the last.

Conflict stimulates change in inter-groups relations. The teachers, with less power, attempted to use their resources to alter the existing control structure. Increasing organizational strength of the teachers reduced the power differential between the groups even as the conflict escalated. In this new relationship, communications shifted from avoidance of cooperation to confrontation of the group differences. The conflict reduced operation of the organization almost to a stalemate on two occasions. Under these conditions, planned educational change became a low priority, except when the project was used by both sides as a lever to gain advantage.

CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE AND CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES: INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

One of the significant characteristics of modern complex organizations is the conscious planning of projects to improve the organization and its work. In the case of schools, projects often fail or do not have intended effects because efforts to adopt planned innovations are complex processes involving persistent and intricate problems. Those who attempt educational innovations usually are not well prepared for the range of problems confronting such efforts, including: incorrect definition of the problem to be solved; foreseen difficulties in implementation; adoption of educational technology which does not match the problem; resistance or non-participation by teachers or other groups; absence of community support and participation; and inadequate leadership.[1] Most important, however, is the occurrence of unforeseen problems especially when coupled with resistance from one or more groups. In Constantine, a conflict of ideologies produced dispute. Who should lead and whose ideas are acceptable? Who decides whether change is acceptable?

The Experimental Schools project started with high hopes and promise to achieve significant improvements in student attitudes and achievement. Working relationships among school personnel would be based on cooperation in pursuit of commonly accepted goals. It was hoped that significant community involvement in planning and implementing the project would re-emphasize the central importance of the schools to the community and

bring residents into a more knowledgeable and cooperative relationship with schools, educators, and students.

The project was a test of the abilities of people to work together to define and implement a broad range of changes to the school system. It emphasized an educative environment based on trust and cooperation, creating conditions in which each student would benefit from a positive humanizing atmosphere. It required that teachers, administrators, and other staff modify their patterns of relating to one another and to students; the end result was to be improvement in student attitudes toward self and school, thereby hopefully leading to improved learning.

When the project came to an end most components were not functioning at expected levels, some had been abandoned, some elements never started. The dream of comprehensive change had long since faded, with only hope that some elements might be salvaged.

Organizations are comprised of interest groups which are in continuous competition for the available status and resources to be gained from organizational membership. Conflict is not an occasional occurrence but a normal organizational process generated by the competition between groups. Efforts to produce planned innovations in the organization or in its tasks will be affected by the nature of the conflict and changes resulting from it. Two basic types of changes can be distinguished within the organization, therefore. First, there is the process of planned innovation which is a systematic effort to induce change to some part of the organization or to the product of the organization. Second is the normal pattern of change which occurs to every organization over time. There is considerable overlap

between the two when groups or individuals within the organization react to the planned innovation and cause additional change to occur to existing organizational processes and structure.

The Experimental Schools project in Constantine was a planned innovation effort presented to the community and schools at a time when the school organization had experienced growth problems through annexation and migration, and increasing penetration of influences from the urban society. The teaching staff was becoming increasingly professional in outlook and seeking increased status recognition and autonomy. At the same time, the administration and school board had begun to join forces to forestall any dilution of their respective areas of authority and control. The resulting conflict developed into a confrontation of opposing ideologies about the roles of the respective interest groups and management of the schools. It led to frequent modifications of project components and acceptance of substitute goals when original goals were found to be unattainable.

This chapter presents an analysis of the ways in which planned educational change was modified and disrupted by organizational conflict. The promise of planned change is likely to be frustrated or diverted when normal organizational conflict becomes openly hostile or participation of interested groups is diverted. The basis of the conflict is differing principles of educational practice and organization.

CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES

The teachers wanted to be recognized as professionals, with accompanying higher status and greater autonomy. Recognition as professionals

meant less control by administrators and school board, which was perceived by those groups as a threat to their traditional authority. While teachers advanced arguments for change in the authority structure of the schools, administrators and school board presented counter arguments that the efficient and orderly management of the schools required that they continue to fulfill their traditional functions in administration and policy decisions.

The authority and competence of administrators and school board was was questioned by teachers, while the loyalty of the teachers was challenged, in turn, by administrators and school board. Teachers blamed administrators for a lack of leadership and for a failure to recognize their professional skills; administrators blamed teachers for not caring about the students or the community.

The real struggle, however, was over distribution of status and authority in the school system. The competition of interests between teachers, administrators, and school board produced open conflict which was not resolvable, and which led to a public test of strength. That test of strength led to a public meeting during the strike. The school board learned it did not have as much community support as it had anticipated; and the teachers had more than was anticipated.

During the next four years, there was continual tension as teachers sought additional status, rewards, and authority, while administrators and the school board attempted to preserve their control over teachers and school management. The final year of the project brought another test of strength causing the longest and most bitter contract negotiations in the school's history. Again, a public meeting showed that neither side owned the allegiance

of the residents. They wanted the dispute settled and school returned to normalcy much more than they cared about the conditions of the contract.

The struggle between teachers and the administrators and school board was a competition over conflicting ideologies of authority. The teachers based the legitimacy for their authority in their professionalism, collegiality, and experience in working with students. The administrators established their authority on their appointed roles as managers of the bureaucratic office of the school system. The school board relied on elective mandate and public trust to legitimate their authority. For some purposes, administrators saw their interests as separate from those of the school board, but joined forces with the board to combine managerial authority with elective authority to oppose increasing demands of the teachers. Administrators and board members were part of the same social circles in the community and shared the same class interests. Whereas administrators and board members chose to measure individual status against local-community standards, the teachers preferred to have status evaluated by a more cosmopolitan standard of occupation, including income and education factors. Administrators and board members espoused local control as a justification for retention of their authority in the school system. They were not concerned with loss of that authority to extra-community interests as much as they resisted its loss to the teachers.

Group Differences Clarified by Status and Outlook

Differences between the groups can be clarified by examining Wolcott's (1977) conception of three different ideational perspectives between teachers

and "technocrats" in their orientations toward time, authority, and style. Administrators and others who support the model of bureaucratic organizational structure are considered technocrats. Using the anthropological concept of moiety as a model for analysis, Wolcott documents differences in the ideational perspectives of teachers and technocrats through differing orientations toward time, authority, and style. With regard to time, technocrats are oriented toward the future and long-range change; teachers are oriented toward the present and student interaction. Technocrats favor formal authority, while teachers favor professional autonomy and individualism. If teachers accept the technocrat's authority, they are more willing to comply with rules and regulations, or externally imposed change. Technocrats favor bureaucratic and technocratic efficiency, while teachers prefer a style based on egalitarianism.

Teachers are resistant to efforts by administrators to exert control over their behavior. The norm of teacher autonomy is in conflict with another norm, that administrators should have authority to influence instructional activities and performance of teachers (Blau and Scott, 1962).

The school organization is made up of a competitive arrangement of roles to carry out the functions and responsibilities assigned to it. It is not simply a bureaucratic model of efficiency for task accomplishment, but a formalization of power distributed among several subgroups. Organizations consist of a structured arrangement of power and authority, and they consist of mechanisms of authority through which the various groups struggle to gain a larger measure of control. It is this struggle for control which induces change in the organization.

> Organizations, then, can be seen as power struggles along several dimensions and as using a number of tactics and divices, according to availability and the personal predilections of the individuals involved. It should not be surprising, given the instabilities of most forms of control, that organizations tend to change their structures and goals as well as their personnel. This has been considered extensively in the modern literature on goal displacement; the main difficulty has been that the official idea of the organization at one point in time (typically the ideal of those who set it up, or of some outside observer) has been reified, and changes described in moral tones, instead of looking at the real complex of interest groups who are always on the scene and among whom power has shifted over time. (Collins, 1975:295)

In his study of bureaucracy, Weber emphasized the necessity and importance of the formal distinction of status and social distance among members of an organization, to promote impartiality and efficiency in their conduct (1947:329-334). In the relationship between administrator and teacher, the administrator holds the position of greater prestige and authority. Recognition of status distinction and social distance must occur in school and community. And here is where the conflict is likely to occur; teacher status as employee does not disrupt the hierarchical structure, but when teachers seek recognition as professionals and question the authority structure, organizational effectiveness is threatened.

EXAMINING PROJECT STRATEGY: HUMANIZING AND INDIVIDUALIZING

The project objectives of improvements in student attitudes and achievement were to be achieved through five tactics transforming the relationships between individuals involved in schooling. The objectives were dependent on the adoption of the concepts of humanizing and individualizing. Instructional interaction between student and teacher, and others, was to be changed from an authoritarian to an egalitarian relationship. Two of the tactics, "Guidance Approach to Teaching" and "Individualized Instruction," were given

the greatest importance, and their use was intended to produce significant alterations to classroom structure and control. The three remaining tactics expanded the basic concepts to include everyone involved with the educational process in or outside the classroom.

Guidance Approach to Teaching

The designers of the humanizing concept did not intend Guidance Approach to Teaching to be a breakdown in discipline or elimination of the legitimate authority of the teacher as expert. Rather, the intent was that discipline in the classroom would develop out of the sharing of knowledge among teacher and students and, at the same time, avoid the use of teacher authority based on superior status and power. Rather than using coercion to transmit information from teacher to student, learning would occur through the guidance approach of teachers committed to understanding the educational and personal needs of each student.

To make the transition to humanizing involved a complex set of changes for most teachers. First, the continuing hostility between administrators and teachers made the latter group reluctant to accept or make use of administrator-backed programs. Anything supported by administrators was subjected to critical review by many teachers; they did not respect the professional competence of the principals. Administrators tended to demand compliance from teachers rather than rely on cooperation among professionals. Some teachers were not willing to commit to the humanizing concept because they feared loss of classroom control. The administrators provided convenient scapegoats on which to hang the fault for not accepting the concept and enabled teachers to avoid dealing with those fears.

Second, a shift to the humanizing approach meant a transition from comfortable routines of teaching to a less familiar, problem-centered, approach. Teachers were reluctant to accept change when inposed from outside their group. Their sense of professional competence and their skills and and specialization gave them confidence. They believed that they knew, better than the technocrats, what worked in the classroom. Many teachers were critical of workshops, conducted by hired consultants, to increase knowledge of humanizing techniques. Few teachers applied this knowledge in the classroom, claiming it was not useable. They disliked the use of hired consultants, believing they had as much knowledge among themselves.

Third, the concept of humanizing in the project plan was based on an assumption that teachers were not doing an adequate job of interacting with students and did not already know how to "humanize." This assumption was rejected by many teachers who believed their skills and experience in the instructional interaction were a basic part of their professional identity.

Fourth, the continuing hostility between teachers and the school board over salary and decision making left many teachers with little interest in the project, and humanizing in particular. Angered by the board's reluctance to pay higher salaries, to give credit for superior performance, or to recognize teachers as professionals, there was little willingness to put forth additional effort when the rewards were uncertain.

After the strike, teachers were less likely to submit to the authority of an administrative system that had previously failed to solve problems. They had transferred allegiance from that authority structure to the Constantine Education Association (CEA), to the state and national professional organizations, as well as to their individual sense of professionalism. Unwilling

to accept the guidance approach, teachers relied on individual techniques, including "common sense" and reverting to the "basics."

Individualized Instruction

The intent of individualizing was to allow a separate rate of progress for each student, and concentrate classroom instruction on interactions between teacher and individual student. The method required changes in classroom structure and in the maintenance of order. It was an attempt to break away from the lecture format where a class of students received the same information at the same time and were expected to learn at the same speed. Individualizing was more acceptable to teachers than humanizing, because of its implementation through existing curricular categories and the use of commercially prepared learning materials and equipment. Teachers and administrators were more willing to accept changes brought about through methods identified as "technological" improvements. Systematically programmed and slickly marketed materials were easily substituted when achievement of the organization's objectives were difficult.

Individualizing was given primary emphasis in reading and math, two programs for which statewide standardized testing provided yearly information about student achievement. These programs were, consequently, subjected to annual evaluation of their effectiveness. Administrative problems with teacher aides and delayed instructional supplies, provided a set of difficulties to add to the hostility between teachers and administrators. When test results showed that reading and math scores had not improved with the introduction of individualizing, teachers and administrators were eager to modify the components. It was at this point that the interests of the two groups split.

Changes to the reading and math programs developed by administrators were rejected by some teachers, who attempted to introduce their own modifications. The repeated change efforts produced less standardization in teaching the subjects. Uniformity introduced through the project was diminished. The reading program was subjected to annual changes as teachers resisted repeated administrative efforts to introduce new methods. The math program was revised to provide a new standardization but with a return to the traditional lecture format, abandoning the individualizing concept.

The development of subject specialization created a sense of power for teachers who believed they were more experienced and skilled than administrators and, therefore, ought to be responsible for curricular development. As teachers became increasingly confident that the hierarchical structure of authority was not based on greater skill, but on the power of bureaucratic authority, they were increasingly reluctant to accept changes introduced by administrators.

Building Bonds of Trust

The intent to develop a pattern of trust in all human interaction in the school environment was expected to produce "understanding and confidence in ourselves and others." Developed as part of the humanizing concept, this tactic, though not well conceptualized, was an attempt to replace authoritarian patterns with trusting relationships; to replace coercion with cooperation.

No specific efforts were made through courses to meet this objective. Rather, it was subsumed under the humanizing efforts and introduced through the in-service workshops. Consequently, it suffered from the same difficulties as the Guidance Approach to Teaching.

Hostility between the teachers and administrators, born of the competition for authority and status in the schools, precluded the development of relationships based on trust. Interactions between members of the two groups were confrontations of power. The impractibility of basing relationships between these groups on trust also precluded building bonds of trust in other relationships within the school environment, especially those with students.

Administrators and teachers were in competition for status and rewards. Relationships between members of these groups reflected differences in power and authority. Where that competition produced hostility, commitment to organization goals was less important. In attempting to preserve their authority, the administrators used coercion which was met by counter-aggression from the teachers. Efforts to establish cooperation and trust were forgotten.

The Community as a Classroom

The fourth tactic was intended to expand the learning environment beyond traditional classroom limits, to include the community and, even travel outside the community. Elementary students visited the U.S. Post Office to learn its location and functions; they also went camping. High school students traveled to Washington to observe governmental activities and to Quebec to observe French-Canadian customs.

Excursions to nearby and distant locations were usually viewed as welcome breaks from the routine of the classroom and were favored by teachers and students. However, administrators found it difficult to gain school board approval for expensive trips.

Because most trips away from school did not aggravate tensions within the organization, they were a source of relief. Only when teachers and administrators, or school board, disagreed about the cost or utility of a particular trip was tension increased. The concept of travel away from the classroom was less affected by organizational conflict and, in a small measure, served to alleviate tension.

Nonetheless, travel to distant locations was the successful part of this tactic. Local community involvement consisted of little more than had existed prior to the project. Most students did not have school-sanctioned learning experiences with residents. A few high school students were employed in work/study arrangements, but these had existed prior to project funding. There was no significant effort initiated through the project to involve a greater degree of cooperation and participation between residents and students; the community was little used as a "classroom."

Partnership Involvement

The fifth tactic was planned as the involvement of residents in all aspects of the project. At the beginning of the planning year, some residents were involved in planning committees, but that participation soon evaporated as administrators and teachers settled into their traditional school roles. No effort was made by school staff or residents to provide continuous resident participation, although some residents were occasionally involved as observers or teacher assistants.

Residents were encouraged to attend several demonstrations. Experimental Schools was a frequent subject at Parent-Teacher Association meetings. Yet parents were not invited to participate in planning and decision making.

The project was directed by the administrators and school board; resident participation was merely a form of manipulation where they learned about the project through "show and tell" demonstrations.

The administrators were assigned by bureaucratic rank to manage the resources of the project, which gave them effective control. They were frequently confronted with teacher demands for greater participation in decision making. To the administrators, encouraging resident participation was likely to produce additional threats to their authority. They believed they could retain control of the project and the schools only if teacher and resident participation was limited. To them, resident participation in decision making is incompatible with traditional principles of the bureaucratic model of efficiency, with its requirement of hierarchical authority.

Teachers would not approve of resident participation in teaching. They approved of participation as assistants and as teacher-aides; both positions clarified the superior status of teachers and did not challenge teacher authority. But, to permit residents to participate in decisions about what was taught, and how, would be a threat to the recognition of skill specialization and professional stature of teachers.

Not having prior experience in the decision-making process in schools, most residents readily accepted the loss of their fleeting moment of involvement with planning committees. Many were content to permit the schools to be run by professional teachers and administrators without question, until a serious disruption occurred. Resident participation is episodic, not a steady pattern of demands. And when aroused, it is focused on specific issues rather than broad policies (Wirt and Kirst, 1972:76).

Most residents participate minimally or not at all in civic functions. To improve the level of participation, change agents must create structures which can provide a concrete base for civic involvement. That was a basic presumption of the Experimental Schools program which demanded such structures be present in each of the local project plans. However, soon after they were initiated in Constantine, resident committees were abandoned. They had served the purpose of gaining approval for the project from a federal agency. There was no desire among teachers or administrators for residents to be effective and participating contributors to the management of the project. Local residents, unaware that the mechanism for effective participation had been eliminated, did not protest. Neither did the staff at ES/Washington.

CONFLICT AND SUBSTITUTION OF GOALS

The occurrence of unforeseen problems brought on by organizational conflict created conditions in which planned project goals were unobtainable. Thwarted by the lack of success, and determined to provide innovative improvements, teachers and administrators introduced replacements and modified desired outcomes. Unable to achieve original goals, they introduced substitute goals. Frequent changes to project components indicates the problem was not resistance to change, but rather, inability to cooperate on selected tactics. The failure to cooperate was a result of the struggle for status and power within the organization. Some administrators and teachers competed to find workable tactics and methods. An innovation initiated by an administrator would be received with little enthusiasm by teachers. Similarly, a teacher-initiated change would be rejected or receive ambivalent support from administrators. Each group sought to be the initiator of change; neither had sufficient power to compel compliance from the other.

Shifts in the Balance of Power

The plan to implement innovations was predicated on the cooperative interaction of organizational groups. The plan did not consider the continuous nature of change within the organization caused by the efforts of those groups to increase their power. Changes in the balance of power were generally increases in teacher power and decreases in traditional administrator and school board power.

Demands for teacher power grew as a consequence of higher levels of skills and specialization. As their skills increased, teachers were increasingly aware that administrators could not maintain the traditionally high degree of control. Teachers rejected the management model which required that administrators evaluate them for particular skills, although the teachers had superior training and experience in those skills. Teachers argued that the hierarchical structure of authority was not based on greater skill, but on the power of bureaucratic office.

The advent of federal funding and project monitoring broadened the scope of school administration, and the additional resources thereby introduced broadened the range of potential administrative responsibilities. The Experimental Schools project provided a significant increase in the school budget and required the hiring of two additional administrators. All decisions and the distribution of funds were made at the direction of the administrators and school board. Similarly, the addition of two administrators broadened the responsibilities of the group.

Innovation in the schools was widely accepted and focused on problem-centered methods, with a coincident rejection of established routine. Reluctance to try a new technique was replaced by willingness to try something

new as soon as an existing technique was declared unsuccessful. Willingness to accept change was the unwritten credo, regardless of whether that change was toward a new "progressive" method, or a return to the "basics."

Shifts in the balance of power were affecting teachers, administrators, and school board, and produced a condition of episodic change which affected the project. A climate sympathetic toward change had been building for several years. It was a unique coincidence of events that the pressure reached a critical level when the teachers' organization acquired aggressive leadership and the district contracted with a federal agency for the four year project.

There was competition of conflicting ideologies, which pitted groups within the schools against each other, and which caused the goals of planned change to become subordinate to the struggle for control of the organization. Members of the organization were not resistant to change. It was a struggle for control of the resources and status which was to determine the nature and direction of change.

As teachers acquired additional power, they increasingly used it to obtain advantages. They became more aware that personal status was dependent on the status of their occupation as a whole, as much as on individual efforts. Individual mobility within the occupation was relatively limited, which motivated them to gain collective mobility.

The striving for recognition as professionals was met with resistance by administrators and school board, who sought to retain their respective areas of control. When competition for status and control of the organization became a hostile confrontation, as in the strike, it was a test of strength which had to be resolved. When that strike was settled without a satisfactory

resolution of the differences, the hostility continued without further public testing of strength, until another confrontation occurred three years later.

The struggle within the organization was over power, especially in decision making. It was this competition for control of the resources and status (which determined who had the power) that caused social change. Change in the organization caused by shifts in the balance of power severely limited efforts for collective action. The strike by teachers and their unwillingness to be intimidated by the brinkmanship strategy of the school board were indications that the balance of power had altered. Recognition of their organizational strength made teachers less willing to be coerced into accepting the Experimental Schools project. It left administrators with less dominative authority to bring pressure on teachers.

Demands for increased teacher status and professional autonomy conflicted with desires of administrators and school board to maintain hierarchical authority and control. The project was an attempt to change the teacher-student interaction through humanizing and individualizing. Teachers were angered by the implication that they were the cause of student problems. They blamed the problems on poor management of the schools.

Educational changes which threaten the position of one or more groups in the organization would be rejected, while those which are not threatening would be more acceptable. The objectives of humanizing and individualizing were viewed by teachers as threats to their traditional authority in the classroom. Without effective power in management of the schools, the teachers found it necessary to preserve traditional classroom authority and reject the innovations. Those successful art and music components and the wilderness program were not viewed as threats to the existing authority of the administrators and school board; they too were rejected.

The ability of administrators to manage the innovations and gain teacher compliance was further limited by the lack of trust and confidence between members of the two groups. Administrators viewed many teachers as troublemakers, who were reluctant to accept change. Communications between individuals were based on the coercive force of authority of the administrators. And that was limited by the lesser reliance on rules and decentralization of authority which is characteristic of school organization. Teachers showed open dislike for individual administrators and disdain for the authority of their positions. They took advantage of the lesser reliance on rules to press for greater individual responsibility in deciding issues affecting the classroom. Within the elementary schools, some teachers went further and challenged the authority of the principal by modifying or disregarding his teaching policies and directives. The small number of administrators and the decentralization of authority among school buildings allowed teachers to exploit weaknesses in the hierarchic structure of authority. When administrators and school board members attempted to invoke their authority through personalistic demands rather than reliance on the authority legitimated by their formal roles, the rejection by teachers was even more pronounced.

The ability of the organization to undertake collective action for change depends on the capacity of a dominant interest group, usually the organization leaders, to use political power to bring effective pressure on other interest groups (Dahrendorf, 1959, Schein, 1977, Hinings et al., 1974). Where, however, subordinate interest groups choose to pursue their own interests, political struggle is inevitable and the attempted innovation may be short-lived or unsuccessful. Any change in the structure of the organization caused by shifts in the balance of power will make collective action

for change difficult to implement. Competition for control of resources and status in the organization is central to the change process, and the greater the sense of independent power a group has, the less amenable it will be to control by a superordinate group (Collins, 1975:325).

Where project goals were not achieved through a particular component, or set of components, administrators, teachers, and school board accepted alternative change strategies and the increased willingness to accept change itself as substitute goals. The confusion over goals and tactics was continued. The planners had confused means with ends in the original project plan. That plan identified student attitudes, academic achievement, and career orientations as problems which the schools had failed to meet. The correction of those problems should have been identified as the goals of the project. Instead, the plan specified the five "goals" of the humanizing and individualizing concepts. Those five goals have been identified as tactics in this study. They were the means by which the student problems (ends) were to be solved. That initial confusion was written into the project plan and was criticized by ES/Washington. Agency officials later dropped their criticism when the administrators accused the agency of attempting to force the rural district to accept Washington's standards. The confusion over goals and strategies continued throughout the project as components were judged unsuccessful and then modified or discarded.

The substitution of goals frequently occurred as a consequence of competition between principals, teachers, and the project coordinator. Since the issue of decision-making authority was never satisfactorily resolved, the competition continued as individuals attempted to introduce changes which suited their individual or group interests. When a principal modified the reading program, for example, the teachers would look for a demonstrated

weakness in the method, as an opportunity to suggest introduction of an alternative method which better matched teacher interests. Thus, alternatives to the methods of various original components became acceptable as often as the original methods were judged unsuccessful. Methods were usually rejected for one of the following reasons: test scores were disappointing, supplies were unavailable, teachers complained that the method was not useful, and lack of interest by teachers, administrators, or school board.

As the pattern of modifications continued, the project objectives of improving student attitudes, performance, and career orientation were neglected as measures of success of the project. The implementation of the methods and later alternative methods became, for some, the objectives of the project. Whenever a method was implemented or modified, it was immediately judged a success as a consequence of its being placed into operation. This identification of success with mere implementation of a method was, therefore, substitution of the project's goals with lesser, intermediate goals. Success was measured by activation of components and not whether they ultimately led to some desired changes in students. Change for the sake of change became acceptable, with little concern for the project's original objectives.

The area of greatest conflict between teachers and administrators was over control of instructional activity and teacher performance. The project was recognized by teachers as directed by the administration. They believed they had no control. Efforts by administrators to implement project components were frequently met with reluctant compliance by teachers who were unwilling to openly defy administrative authority. But, they did not enthusiastically use the methods of the various components and gradually either attempted to substitute their own variations or returned to previously used methods. The classroom was the teacher's preserve. They defied efforts by administrators

to violate that preserve even under the guise of an Experimental Schools project.

The six administrators met weekly in the office of the superintendent. The meetings covered a wide range of issues, including: staffing changes, discipline of students, inter-scholastic athletics, and planning and development of all project components. Changes in the curriculum, textbooks or other educational materials were discussed before approval was sought from the school board. This administrative council, in effect, had the power to approve or deny changes requested by teachers. Although teachers could appeal directly to the school board, it was unlikely that the board would approve teacher requests unless recommended by the administrators.

A contest for influence with the superintendent quickly developed as the three principals sought to reinforce their importance and used every opportunity to demonstrate that "normal" operation of the schools, as conducted by the principals, should continue to have priority over project activities. While the project coordinator spoke of the comprehensiveness and all-inclusive nature of the project, the principals attempted to subtly define the components as additions to their existing systems of operation. The project coordinator defined the project as synonymous with the school curriculum and during the first implementation year, began to eliminate the use of the name, Experimental Schools, as a label for the changes occurring in Constantine. He wanted to retitle the entire project as changes in curriculum. Of course this interest in reducing the visibility of the ES label was also done to lessen the hostility from the teachers, and to reduce the potential for controversy among residents who might fear federal intervention.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE:
EDUCATIONAL CHANGE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

In any organization, patterns of action develop which contribute to conflict as well as to stability. According to Simmel (1955), conflict is necessary to the processes of group life and structure; to function effectively, groups require dissension as well as consensus. Groups are created and strengthened by conflict, which also works to prevent complete destruction within social structures by acting as a safety valve. Simmel believed that conflict was brought on by group characteristics rather than interpersonal hostility, which he saw as the result of group conflict rather than its cause.

Conflicts arise between individuals and groups occupying different positions within an organization, because of their competition for status or rewards. Changes are resisted by school administrators when they believe their position will be weakened or they will have less power. Teachers fear changes which they believe will require additional work for the same salaries, or if the change will bring lessened professional status. Collins pointed out that conflict is produced by differences between social positions, arising only between persons as they occupy or are affected by other positions.

> The crucial encounters in this [bureaucratic] form of organization, then, are those which constantly reinforce the notion that men are only occupants of positions who are subject to records and formal rules; ritual deference is to the rules themselves and to the organization in the abstract, not to any particular individuals. The accompanying concept of legitimacy is rational-legal: the idea that the organization is enacted by human rationality along general principles, not arbitrary loyalty to particular individuals sanctified by custom. (1975:294)

Collins also argued that personalistic interactions underlie the superficial organizational structure. The strength of individuals in certain positions is reflected in their ability to make use of strategies for control

of other organizational members. Recognized leaders are the most important actors in any change effort, they control resources and have authority to manipulate others. Modern bureaucratic organizations are an admixture of control strategies. (Roth, 1968) Successful organizational politicians are able to use formal rules as well as informal networks and personal emissaries in efforts to gain maximum leverage. (Collins, 1975:295)

Studying conflict within an organizational context seems especially appropriate to understanding change in educational organizations. Schools deal with a unique product and the problems in accomplishing the tasks are not predictable. There is less reliance on rules and a greater degree of decentralization of authority. The schools have complex goals which lead to greater dependence on normative control rather than on rules and written reports. It is usually assumed that coordination and control of activity are the important dimensions on which modern organizations succeed. But, Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that myths embedded in the organization's environment are an alternative source for control. Where organizations are influenced by the institutional environment, gaps are likely to appear between the formal structure and continuous work activities. Under the pressure of competing change processes, the organization is also likely to be temporarily out of alignment with the prevailing environment. In this way, groups within and outside of the organization may attempt to influence its direction.

Conflict is produced by differentiation in status among groups in the social organization, especially when one group seeks to modify its own status relative to the other groups. In the school organization, conflict is likely to arise when teachers attempt to gain greater recognition as professionals, while the school board and administration seek to maintain control of the schools and to preserve their superordinate status. Conflict occurs as a

consequence of the competition for status. It reflects differences between groups through rules and networks, although it may surface through personalistic interactions as well as in group confrontations. In Constantine the dominant interest group (the administrators) attempted to invoke collective action to implement a set of innovations. They did not have sufficient strength, however, to effect the changes. Their strategies were not effective: alignment with another powerful group (the school board), trade-off through additional wages paid to participating teachers, use of technical expertise through hired consultants, restricted flow of communication to keep teachers and residents relatively uninformed, and withdrawal to minimize contacts with teachers and residents. Antagonized by their own lessened importance in the management of the innovation process, the teachers chose not to comply with administrator's dictates. Seeking to minimize the disparity created by the non-compliance of the teachers, the administrators lessened visibility of the original projective objectives and concentrated on modifying those elements of the project which caused less dissension and had less impact. The result was an unsuccessful innovation effort.

Conflict is an ever-present and ubiquitous process of organizations. Competition between groups and individuals produces tensions which occur almost independently of the individuals occupying the various positions in the organization. Conflict occurs as a consequence of changes in social arrangements and expectations which have not yet been recognized and formalized within the organizational structure. The complex nature of school organizations and the accelerating demands of teachers for recognition as professionals are challenges to the existing bureaucratic model of efficiency, directed by a lay board of elected community representatives. Administrators found increasing

difficulty in maintaining centralized control at the same time as teachers were pressing for greater participation in decision making.

Teachers were forced to choose between a model of traditional authority structure supported by claims of loyalty to the community, or a model of professionalism which supported a standard of national educational values. This conflict of ideologies was further complicated by the concurrent need of teachers for greater status recognition. They compared their status with other emerging professional groups as well as non-professional groups. They believed themselves to be at a status disadvantage, and sought to improve their position and lessen status incongruency. Advances in authority and salary did not match increases in education and skill levels. To further their own group interest in improving their position of authority and salary, teachers chose to accept the model of professionalism and consequently lessened compliance to the traditional model of authority. That split was a focal point of their differences with administrators and school board.

The ideological split lessened the ability of the organization to take collective action. Teachers relied on the autonomy they enjoyed within the classroom to avoid compliance with goals which they believed threatened their position. The conflict was severe enough to undermine the interests and leadership of the administration.

The unconventional and rebellious pattern of behavior through which the teachers attempted to alter their status and the distribution of rewards and authority can be seen as an ongoing insurgency within the bureaucratic structure of the schools (Zald and Berger, 1978). In Constantine such a continuous social movement was not well organized through most of the project years, but was supported by most teachers. Although the conflict affected

all areas of school operation, its most direct and visible effect was on the project. Previously existing elements of the school program had been buttressed by strong normative sanctions. However, the project was new and imprecisely defined; organizational behavior had not yet been explicitly prescribed. Teachers were less likely to encounter sanctions for not conforming to expected behavior. Moreover, the factionalism among the principals and project coordinator left the order of authority undecided and gave encouragement to the insurgent behavior of the teachers. The insurgency was also aided by the inability of the administrators to closely observe teacher use of project components. Teachers demanded autonomy in the classroom and attempted to limit visits by principals.

The teachers accepted the basic goals of the school district yet sought to introduce changes in the authority structure and to increase their rewards. The teachers' insurgent behavior was not directed at the project, but rather at the hierarchical authority structure. The project became the victim of that conflict and a convenient mechanism through which to express dissatisfaction. Except for encouragement and assistance given by the Michigan Education Association during the strike, the teachers received no direct support for their rebelliousness. They were, however, encouraged by their own increased awareness of professional teacher ideology and the widespread occurrence of teacher insurgencies throughout Michigan during these years. And, they were aware that many community residents were sympathetic.

The conflict continued throughout the four years of the project, without public recognition by administrators or school board except during the strike. The multiple goals of the school system, and the ambiguous nature of its hierarchical structure created conditions wherein the insurgency survived despite sporadic leadership and organization.

The conflict was continuous and not suppressed because professional and normative commitments permitted the teachers an arena of operation with some degree of freedom. Although the administrators and board members were threatened by the actions of the teachers, the objectives of the teachers did not include an intent to deprive them of all their authority and status. The teachers did not want to upset the applecart; they merely wanted a few more apples.

FINAL NOTE: REJECTION BY THE COMMUNITY

In the end, actions by the residents of the community determined several outcomes of the struggle. Most residents were not willing to have an organizational conflict disrupt the pace of life in the community. On several occasions, public expression of dissatisfaction with the breakdown in orderly operation of the schools had restored a sense of normalcy.

The conflict between teachers and the administration and school board was not important to the residents until it became such an explosive issue that the continuity of the educational institution in the community was threatened. Then the conflict became a threat to the atmosphere and pace of life in the community and an obstruction of the process of education. The conflict between the opposing ideologies, which might also be characterized as a conflict between local and cosmopolitan attitudes, was a manifestation of the tensions between local and national value systems about the structure of education. It disrupted a planned program of change and undermined the willingness of the community to accept change. This sharpening and displaying of conflicting ideologies[2] was tolerated by the residents until it reached the point where many residents felt that public

action was necessary to restore order to the schools.

The members of the school board and the administrators were widely recognized as leaders in the community. Most were local influentials in the community by virtue of their participation in wide networks of social relationships and involvement in community organizations. Each time the conflict with the teachers brought a public test of strength, however, the influence of these leaders was not enough to bring them the support of most residents. The board frequently raised the issue of local control as a rallying cry to the community, seeking support for their belief that they had the authority to compel the teachers to act. Although it has long been thought by sociologists that local power groups dictate public school policies (Hollingshead, 1949; Eliot, 1959), such findings do not consider the situation when the majority of a community's leadership is involved in a struggle with another powerful status group within the school system.

A community unused to conflict, such as Constantine, has no precedents to follow in seeking resolution to an ideological schism. There was probably little relationship between normal voting patterns in past school elections[3] and the behavior of the residents in forcing resolution of the conflict. The residents were not interested in causing a victory for one side or the other; the major concern was restoration of normal school operation.

Finally, the unusual action of the residents in rejecting the school levy increase by two-to-one margins on two occasions was a protest by the voters to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with the operation of the schools. In the past regular passage of the levy by the voters was taken as a vote of confidence in the schools. Previous levies were passed even

when they failed in neighboring districts, so this defeat must be seen as a political protest by the residents. It was a protest of ordinarily powerless and alienated members of the community. The residents were powerless to stop the struggle over conflicting ideologies, and powerless to stop the infusion of federal funds in the project (only a few wanted to stop the manna from above, anyway). But they were not powerless to vote against providing more of their money to a school system which did not match their expectations.

It was reasoned in planning the project that the change process would affect the lives of the adult residents of the community as well as those of the students. The institutional involvement with a federal agency was expected to produce only minimal subjugation of the schools to external directives, thereby minimizing the loss of community autonomy. The schools were expected, however, to increase interaction with residents individually and with other institutions on the horizontal plane.

Intrusions from the outside, especially cultural intrusions, were treated with suspicion by some people. Most community residents, however, welcomed certain changes, were ambivalent to others, and opposed only those which were considered most antithetical to their lifestyle. When they were confronted with a change, many residents made the decision whether to reject or accept it on the basis of how it was presented to them, rather than on an evaluation of the issue itself.

There is broad agreement that schools reflect the social structure of the community in which they are located, and that change in the school is, to some undetermined extent, limited by the character of the community

and the values which predominate. However, any review of the current social sciences literature would bring one to the conclusion that there is not much agreement about the best schema for describing the role of the community in the change process.

It is important to consider community factors which affect the innovation process and the reactions of the organization to the community-environment factors. One review of the literature suggests that recent research has usually examined only a small set of the possible range of organizational adjustments to the environment, has not examined the role of managerial choice in adapting to constraints in the environment of the organization, and has not considered dynamic aspects of the adjustment process (Miles, Snow, and Pfeffer, 1974).

Changes in one institutional structure in a community are important to other structures, but do not necessarily cause concurrent change in other elements of the community. Hillery views community organizations as integrated through cooperation, yet insists there is "structural free-wheeling" among them; meaning that one institutional structure can alter or change without necessarily affecting or causing a subsequent change in other related institutional structures (1968:70-71). Since symbols have different meanings for different people, an action is not necessarily met by reaction. A school system, for example, might attempt or actually implement changes without affecting other institutions of the community.

The rural community is going through a period of transition and thus creates a problem in definition as one attempts to study planned social change. No longer primarily dependent on agriculture or extractive industries, the economy of many rural communities is diverse and many-

faceted. The influences of the national society are more prevalent than ever, although to some observers, those living in the "hinterland" are still not overwhelmed by urban culture (Willits, et al., 1974). The ability of rural residents to be more mobile and break with tradition indicates that the earlier model of the isolated rural community no longer exists.

Stein (1960) argued that the societal processes of urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization are transforming American communities and institutions. The relative isolation of the rural community has been gradually disappearing, replaced by interactions with this variety of societal processes. Although cautious about accepting many of these changes, most rural residents do not fear them, and would not choose to return to a more isolated existence. This is in contrast to what Vidich and Bensman (1958) found in Springdale, where the people were reported to be in awe of the complexity of the urban world outside their community. Two decades have elapsed since that study, and perhaps that is the most important reason why the people of Constantine do not seem overwhelmed by the world beyond their community. Mass communications and a multitude of cultural interfaces have brought the two worlds much closer together. Moreover, whereas Vidich and Bensman found resentment among Springdalers because of a perception that urban people devalued their rural lifestyle, the people of Constantine are not worried about such a perception, probably because it does not appear to be as noticeable; in Constantine, the gap between rural and urban has lessened. Nonetheless, residents of Constantine are proud of their rural lifestyle, and believe that many urban dwellers would prefer to live in a small community such as theirs. That

belief is supported by what they learn from the mass media and from reports of former urban dwellers who have moved to Constantine.

SUMMARY

The Constantine School District was an arena wherein persistent efforts to maintain customary routines and traditional modes of authority were continually challenged by efforts to introduce externally initiated changes. Educational improvement through federal initiative, and assertions by teachers that they were better prepared than their predecessors to manage the problems of the learning environment, were introduced to schools and community at the same time.

Change in this school system can best be explained by examining the nature of organizational conflict which arose from those teacher demands. The educational innovation was closely related to the outcomes of the conflict. School administrators and school board members struggled to maintain centralized control over educational practices. They also subscribed to the progressive administrative ideas which demanded greater specialization and decentralization, threatening that control. The conflict of ideologies heightened the tension of a changing educational climate. The nature of the conflict leads to four conclusions about the educational change process in Constantine.

First, change created threats to those in positions of authority, including teacher authority over students and administrator and school board control over teachers. Humanizing was feared by many teachers as a potential for loss of control in the classroom. The managers of the school organization feared that participation of teachers and residents in deci-

sion-making would result in a loss of centralized control.

Second, the existence of conflict made the impetus toward planned change more problematic. Significant change was not likely to occur as long as organizational groups were in hostile competition for the sources of power. That struggle was over authority within the school organization; teachers wanted greater autonomy, while the school managers want to retain bureaucratic authority.

Third, many changes which occurred were in some form those of goal substitution. Many actual goals were unachievable because the organization was beset with uncontrolled conflict. The participants substituted means, which they were implementing, for the originally planned ends.

Fourth, participation in the project had only minimal value for residents who could not see the importance of an active role in decision-making. Such participation was not encouraged by administrators and teachers, who preferred to maintain the power of their respective positions. However, residents had the final word in registering their disapproval of the disruption of school operation. They refused to provide additional funds.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This volume is the result of an investigation into the adaption of planned educational change by a small rural school district. For five years, the school district attempted to implement "comprehensive" change in its curriculum and method of instruction, with the support of federal funding. The Experimental Schools project for Constantine was planned to be a set of modifications to the existing school program, without changes to its organizational structure. The project ended in June 1977, with the school district troubled by staff dissension, lack of success in project goals, and the community's stunning vote of rejection--events surprisingly different from what had been planned.

The project was an attempt to modify the basis of authority in the learning environment, from authoritarian to egalitarian relationships. The change process was introduced to a school organizational climate in which bureaucratic authority was challenged by subordinates. The conflict among teachers, administrators, and school board became an open confrontation during the teachers' strike at the beginning of the first implementation year of the project. The strike was only the most explosive moment of the conflict which continued afterward.

The project was a test of the abilities of people to work together to define and implement a broad range of changes to the school system. The plan document emphasized creating an educative environment based on trust and cooperation, creating conditions in which each student would benefit from a positive humanizing and individualizing atmosphere. The plan presumed that teachers, administrators, and other staff would modify their patterns of relating to one another and to

the students; the end result would be improvement in student attitudes toward self and school, and improved learning. When the project came to an end most components were not functioning at expected levels, some had been abandoned, some elements never started. The dream of comprehensive change had long since faded, with only hope that some elements might be salvaged.

During the 1960s and early '70s, there was a significant increase in interest and funding for educational innovations in the nation's public schools. Yet many observers were beginning to note that most innovations were foundering--not because of faulty design, but because of difficulties in implementation. Looking at the history of many of these efforts, one would have to conclude that many educators believed that all that was necessary for success was to develop a plan, get it funded, and hold a few summer workshops for teachers. Almost magically, the project would be "implemented" and the major task was then to report to the funding agency and perhaps the public on its progress.

Researchers and policy makers have frequently criticized such efforts which underestimate the complexity of bringing about fundamental change in public schools. Funding agencies further complicate the difficulties by establishing deadlines, budget restrictions and evaluation requirement which frequently prompt educators to place more emphasis on the administrative details of the project than on its actual implementation and continuation. As with Constantine, the lack of success is most often one of <u>adoptive failure</u> and not <u>substantive failure</u> (Miles, 1964). Adoptive failure is a problem within the school organization and the community in which the schools are located. For Constantine, that problem could not be solved without cooperative efforts in schools and community.

The transformation of public education through technology, increases in skills and competence of teachers and administrators, and the influences of state and federal agencies, have brought changes to the institution and increased its importance. Greater demands require new ways of training teachers, new concepts of school organization, and some restructuring of local control of the schools.

The ideological disputes over (1) whether teachers should be supervised, (2) the need for a special class of decision makers, and (3) the inviolability of the sovereignty of the school board, must be resolved or at least diminished before collective action for change is likely to be effective in Constantine. The direction of schools is now mostly determined by professional technology, state assistance and policies, and the values of professionals. Local control, on a daily basis, exists only in the voting power of the school board and the influence of some citizens. But, local influence was demonstrated to still be effective in public meetings and levy elections in Constantine.

Can Program Change be Successful in Constantine?

There were several problems to be resolved in introducing planned change to the school organization. Most basic was the need to make organizational adjustments to diminish hostilities produced through conflict between the various interests of teachers, administrators, and school board. Conflict was continually present between these groups. It might have existed without causing disruption to ordinary organizational functions, and it is even possible that it might have produced a positive effect on collective change efforts if the conflict had

encouraged the groups to compete with each other. But, when the conflict broke into openly hostile confrontations, the result was disruption of collective change efforts.

Planning for the innovation should have included recognition of the nature of organizational conflict and established processes to manage it during the attempted innovation. Denial of effective participation to teachers and residents added to the potential for program failure. Without effective leadership it was not possible to ameliorate the hostile situations.

It should be recognized that the leadership attempted to modify project goals during the implementation period. There was no need to stifle that inclination, nor limit the innovation effort by rigid adherence to originally established goals. However, project planning should have required development of precise goals which were well-defined conceptually. There should have been separation of goals from the strategies for achieving those goals. Ability to avoid the problems of goal substitution will not guarantee actual goal achievement, but it will help to clarify the actual goals as the objectives of the project.

The modification of the project during implementation required an effective evaluation strategy, which could provide immediate information to decision makers. For that evaluation to have been effective, however, the information would have to be used even though it presented political problems to those involved in the project.

Conflict: A Normal Process in Organizations

The study of conflict in organizations provides a focus for looking at a general process of modernization in society, in general,

and more specifically, at the nature of organizations as they change and reflect the flux of that modernization process. The concept of conflict is predicated on the existence of competition between individuals and groups, in a striving for status and authority.

Too often, conflict is thought of as describing only those large-scale problems which become public displays of hostility. However, the day-to-day tensions of interaction and competition are the basis of most conflict, where principles are promoted and defended. The locations of tension are searched by the sociologist in attempting to analyze the conditions which lead to routine organizational conflict.

Such an inquiry may question the portrayal of organizations as being nothing more than equilibrating systems with balancing mechanisms to define the organization's goals and maintain the order of members. Moreover, the bureaucratic personality is not the only type of individual existing in the organization, as demonstrated by the existence of routine conflict which pits technocrat against teacher. The conflict between competing ideologies provides examples of the alternatives available as the various interest groups confront each other over principles of school organization.

Conflict is not readily accepted by organizational groups as the ideal characteristic of group interaction. However, conflict casts groups into a competitive condition which makes them responsive and alert to changing conditions. When a group feels an incongruence of status or shortage of resources, it may urge a change to alleviate the perceived problem. The striving for a balance between the need for resolution and control serves to bring problems into the open, which demonstrates

that organizations actually depend on conflict. Groups may benefit from a particular conflict, or they may be gutted by the hostility it can generate. But, conflict has a potential benefit to contrast with the dehumanizing aspects of the bureaucracy, if it causes people in organizations to strive for their beliefs. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that conflict is not only a cost, but also a benefit to the organization.

In this study, the conflict expanded to open hostility, and its potential benefit was lost, creating a destructive effect on the planned innovation. That this need not have been the case is the message of this volume.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1. The Experimental Schools program was transferred from the U.S. Office of Education to the newly created National Institute of Education (NIE) in August 1972. For a thorough analysis of the founding and early history of NIE, see Sproull et al. (1978) or Doyle (1976).

2. More than $85,000 in Experimental Schools funds are excluded from this budget total.

3. The $702 spent per pupil in 1971-72 and $1,079 in 1976-77 are both close to the average expenditures for similar sized districts in this region.

4. The objectives were stated in the formal plan submitted to ES/ Washington on August 15, 1973.

CHAPTER TWO

1. In other words, he preferred to be a "big fish in a small pond."

2. Catton's (1972) autobiography, Waiting for the Morning Train, describes how his father moved from Constantine to Benzie, Michigan during this period.

3. In his study of "Plainville," West (1945) called the children the most important export from the community. He found that neither the parents nor school reformers understood the basic fact that Plainville produced more children than it could permanently accommodate.

4. While other institutions in the society have become national in scope and organization, the schools remain one of the few local institutions (Martindale, 1960).

5. See Feasibility Study of a Proposed Tri-District Reorganization, 1964.

6. This finding is similar to what Vidich and Bensman (1958) describe as the political "surrender" to mass society, especially with regard to village and township politics, while the control of the schools was still considered a local preserve.

7. A term best characterized by Sinclair Lewis (1922) in his novel about the energetic style of Midwestern small town and city life as exemplified by his principal character, Babbitt.

CHAPTER TWO (Cont.)

8. Vidich and Bensman (1958) apparently found only the former image of the community, a belief in the superiority of the local way of life.

9. Aaron Wildavsky (1964) labeled this type of leader a "meteor."

10. There has been much discussion of change agents and community leadership in the sociological literature. See especially the approach of Merton (1957) in developing the typology of local and cosmopolitan influentials.

11. See Barber's (1961) insightful article which examines the independence of family status and local-community status from social class position.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Lutz (1975) views the school board as the most important local government unit because it is a reflection of the local cultural system of the community. But, there is also the critical view that school systems operate to benefit particular class interests. In his classic study, Hollingshead (1949) described how the school system in a small Midwestern city was controlled by a small number of upper class people who made the schools function for their interests. Vidich and Bensman (1958) found that farmers' interests dominated the school board and the administration and character of the school system.

2. This pattern was halted, however, with the enactment of a "sunshine act," passed by the Michigan legislature and put into effect on May 1, 1977. The "sunshine act" required all meetings by a majority of members of any public agency governing board to be announced in advance and held in a public place. Since this law did not become effective until two months prior to the termination of the Experimental Schools project, its effect on the project was minimal and is not considered in this volume.

3. In his study of teacher militancy in high schools, Corwin (1970) found problems of authority to be the most pervasive issue affecting teachers.

4. The trials and difficulties of one-room, country school teachers are well described by Tyack (1974). See also an historical review of the earlier schools in Constantine in Donnelly (1975).

5. This policy would appear to provide the district with new inexperienced teachers, who would stay for one or two years, and then would move to another district to achieve a raise in salary. However, this policy, if in fact it existed, was not reflected by abnormally high rates of faculty turnover. In recent years, the faculty experienced less than a ten percent turnover each year.

6. Hughes' (1971) excellent treatment of the changing boundaries of a profession provides a real insight to such demands.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. The efforts by the teachers to contact ES/Washington and to provide me, the on-site researchers, with up-to-date information about the strike conditions indicate the strength of this belief.

2. Biddle et al. (1966) report that outsiders' views of teachers often depict them as self-serving and resistant to changes which might affect their status.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Becker (1953) found that maintenance of authority definitions over students is important to teachers to ensure a stable and congenial work environment.

2. See Sproull et al. (1978) for an extended discussion of the founding and early history of the National Institute of Education.

3. When asked if his assessment also applied to "all-American girls," he replied, "Yes, it did."

4. Role overload has been explored by others in studies of superintendents and principals. See Gross et al. (1958) and Gross and Herriott (1965).

5. His enthusiasm was decreased also by continuing competition with the principals for status and recognition by the superintendent. During the first two years of the project, he enjoyed a position as "first among equals." Later, however, the principals reasserted their importance and the coordinator's star began to fall.

6. For a thorough review of the funding objectives for the Experimental Schools program, see Herriott (1979).

CHAPTER SIX

1. Neal Gross (1979) offers a similar list of eight impediments to educational innovations including: failure to diagnose problems properly, failure to anticipate or resolve implementation problems, ad hoc approach to educational innovations, uncritical acceptance of existing innovations, absence of monitoring and feedback mechanisms, absence of teacher and community participation, inadequate planning, and absence of leadership.

2. This would appear to be a recent phenomenon in the community. The conflict between local and societal forces was a prime finding of the study of Springdale in the 1950s, but it was apprently evident only to the sociologists studying the community and not to the residents. See Vidich and Bensman (1958). However, by the late 1960s, Martindale and Hanson (1969) reported that there was a polarization between those citizens who were struggling to preserve the friendly atmosphere and pace of the small town and those trying to update the community to urban and national standards.

3. A recent study by Piele and Hall (1973) reviews some "partial theories" used to explain behavior in school financial elections. Several of the propositions they examine can be explained by more than one of the partial theories, however, and they warn of the danger of accepting such classifications as anything more than a baseline summary of the state of the research.

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APPENDIX: RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Participant observation was the major source of data for this study. The research design of my employer, Abt Associates Inc., called for a resident researcher to live in the community for several years during the period when funds for the Experimental Schools program were available to the school system. During the three and one-half years I lived in Constantine, I conducted a variety of on-site research activities which included becoming acquainted with school and community life; developing relationships with residents which would establish my status as a resident and researcher; maintaining a liaison with my employer's home office in Cambridge, Massachusetts to provide a continuous flow of information regarding project progress; and providing assistance to the home office in the collection of cross-site data for several studies, including surveys, interviews, collections of public records data, students' records, and a variety of other types of information about the organization and operation of the schools, local government, social organizations and business.

RESEARCH ROLE AND IDENTITY

I planned my research role to include observation at school meetings, interviewing and observing participants as they went about their business. Churches, governmental groups and political organizations and office-holders received similar attention. I talked with newspaper publishers and reporters, senior citizens and youngsters, school personnel, and those we call students, with doctors, dentists, lawyers, industrialists, bankers, small business owners, carpenters, plumbers, policemen, volunteer firemen, farmers, grain dealers,

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housewives, the retired, the unemployed, those confined by illness; in short, citizens from all facets of the community. I tried to get to know as many of the residents of the community as was physically possible--to know all of the "important" people and a sizeable number of the "ordinary" residents--and to interview them from time to time as the community came to know and understand its Experimental Schools project. I became familiar with the nature of every day life in my roles as homeowner and community resident. I spent many days, much as a newspaper reporter might, keeping abreast of community events. For the first year and one-half, I attended four or five meetings each week.

Each researcher entering the field carries from previous experiences and training, many expectations, hypotheses and conjectures which lead to a focus on certain things during observation, but which need not lead to early closure about the range of "useful" data. When sifting through the daily intake of data, I attempted to be continuously alert to test my biases and to reject early closure on concepts until they had been observed repeatedly.

Continual effort to provide verification of data is an obvious need. I frequently reminded myself to be concerned with the validity of observations (Bruyn, 1966:255-257). The data was reviewed frequently and reorganized when necessary to provide the best fit as well as to enable publication of findings. I was aware that I owed the host community, the client, colleagues, and that wider audience of interested readers the best possible effort at validating the propositions which made up the analysis. This is a critical part of the research process, with much time required to watch intensely for additional findings and contradictory evidence bearing upon previous ones.

The decision to become more the participant or more the observer is a key one for any field researcher (Gold, 1958:217-221). Often the nature of the subject to be studied dictates the degree to which a researcher can participate in the on-going activities. In a rural community, primary relations are highly valued and an individual's stature in the community is more dependent on demonstrations of honesty and hard work than one's educational credentials or wealth. Doing research required me to actively engage in a variety of role-defining activities in addition to fulfilling my occupational role. I was subject to careful scrutiny in interpersonal relationships with other residents. Consistent honesty in all dealings with neighbors and acquaintances is a highly valued trait. Demonstrations of hard work in caring for one's home, in participating in civic functions, and willingness to share and help one's neighbors, all contribute to the individual's status. Because the individual is judged by such attributes just as much as occupational behavior, the roles of the participant observer in a small community such as Constantine required me to participate actively in the life of the community rather than merely observe from the outside edges.

When I first arrived in Constantine, I informed all whom I met that I was an employee of Abt Associates Inc. of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and that I had been employed by the firm to move to Constantine and live there for the duration of the Experimental Schools project. I further explained that Abt Associates had a contract with the National Institute of Education (NIE) to provide a summative evaluation and documentation of all that occurred in the school district related to the funding for the project. I defined my role as that of a social

science researcher, helping Abt conduct a variety of cross-site comparative research projects as well as developing a case study of the school system.

Many sociologists are familiar with the difficulty in defining to a lay audience what it is that a sociologist does. I had recognized that problem when I moved to Constantine and did not initially attempt to define my work as sociological. Rather, I described what I was doing as an attempt to understand the history of the community and to document the history of the project. As time passed and people came to understand what I was doing, through observing my day to day activities, I gradually introduced my notions about sociological work and the nature of my attempt to do a sociological study of the community and its involvement with the project.

The interpretation of me as a person and as a researcher was not equally acceptable to all residents. For some residents, my acceptance in the community was complete and unquestioned. Some did not know me at all. For a few, however, my move to the community caused them to be suspicious that I presented a danger, either to them, or to the schools and community as a whole. Much of this suspicion centered around my being incorrectly identified as an agent of a subversive federal agency which had as its purpose the destruction of local control of the schools. For some others, there was concern that I might be "writing another Peyton Place." I usually answered this concern by denying that as my purpose and then asking my questioner if he or she actually thought Constantine could provide the background for such a book. The usual response was to the effect that, "No, Constantine is too quiet for any of that."[1]

For several employees of the school system, my presence was seen as a threat, because of my responsibility as a researcher of the Experimental Schools project. This concern early took shape among teachers who identified me as "some kind of accountability creep." That concern faded after a few months when teachers began to know more about me. There was also a concern among some of the school administrators about my presumed skills as an "evaluator," which derived from an earlier promise from ES/Washington of technical assistance on evaluation matters. During the early months of negotiating for project funding, in the last months of 1972 and early in 1973, the administrators had been assured by representatives of ES/Washington that the resident on-site researcher would provide technical assistance in addition to researching the project. By December 1972, however, ES/Washington had decided that to require Abt Associates to maintain concurrent research and technical assistance functions would seriously contaminate the ability of Abt Associates to conduct valid research. Unfortunately, ES/Washington had failed to immediately clarify this change to the administrators of the Constantine Public Schools.

This "loss" of technical assistance was considered a serious breach of a promise by the administrators. The summative research capacity which Abt Associates represented was not nearly as welcomed in Constantine as the anticipated provision of educational expertise to assist them in creating the best possible project. A pragmatic philosophy emphasizing efficiency best characterized school management practices, while scientific research was viewed skeptically at best. Eager for technical assistance which could help the local project, the administrators had little regard for the research role of Abt Associates

which was to provide documentation to external agencies and groups with no direct benefit to Constantine.

For those involved in the local project, it was difficult to comprehend how research activities could be of any help to them or the local community. Abt's research activities were considered by some school administrators to be a "rip-off" in which the schools and the community provided data and received nothing in exchange. They did not see project funding as an exchange with ES/Washington which obligated them to be studied. Moreover, some of the school administrators who were involved from the earliest contacts with ES/Washington believed that they were not adequately informed of the evaluation research component to be carried out by Abt Associates. For all these reasons and more, my research role was viewed with considerable skepticism by some school administrators, several teachers and a few community residents. As a result, I occasionally had difficulty in obtaining certain kinds of information. However, the overall research strategy which I outlined at the beginning of the project remained intact and unimpeded.

Except for these few cases of distrust, living in Constantine as a participant observer was enjoyable and occasionally even exciting. During these years, Linda and I made many friends and were accepted in the community. Being aware of my role as researcher did not seem to inhibit them from telling me their thoughts and convictions. Of course, I asked few direct questions which could be interpreted as embarrassing and found people willing to discuss educational philosophy and practices and the current "problems" of the school system. I became known for my regular attendance at public meetings and on several occasions received praise for this consistent attendance. While not disappearing into the woodwork, I became such a regular at meetings that people often

overlooked my presence and went on with their business, sometimes at behind-the-scenes strategy sessions.

I was always collecting information, and people came to know that my job was not limited to the schedule of a "9 to 5" workday. They were aware that I might learn important bits of information at daily school functions as well as at a private late evening gathering of friends. And most people were not worried by such a role; they enjoyed being studied. It indicated their importance and was flattering to them. For those who were suspicious of my activities, however, there was one unsettling aspect of my job. During the three and one-half years I was continuously collecting information, I completed only one document--an historical sketch of the community (Donnelly, 1975)--not enough to provide residents with a check on the quality and purpose of my work. I was aware that some people were concerned about the possibility of my publishing information which might be politically damaging to them or which might otherwise dramatically affect their career aspirations. I attempted to alleviate such fears by stating that I had no intention of attacking individuals in my reporting and that I intended to avoid the use of names in the published reports.

I tried to avoid looking and acting as a formal researcher. While I usually made notes during public meetings and formal interviews, I rarely did so during thousands of informal conversations. Generally, I memorized the important elements of such conversations and attempted to recall exact answers to specified questions. As soon as possible after an interview I made quick notes; later that same day, I wrote up the entire interview in my field journal. Social occasions often provided unplanned instances for

acquiring information. While I was careful not to ask too many questions, such gatherings frequently offered opportunities for learning important information. It was occasionally frustrating not to be able to ask the question I had in mind, but then sometimes a neighbor or friend would conveniently ask the very question I would have liked to ask.

LIFESTYLE AS A PARTICIPANT OBSERVER

Linda and I were involved in the life of the community in various ways. I was a member of the Rotary and Jaycee organizations. We were both involved with the local historical society. I worked for the Community Chest and a boy scout troop. I worked as a volunteer probation officer for the county and was appointed to the board of directors of the St. Joseph County Youth Services Bureau.

These organizational ties provided access to a variety of groups in the community and provided significant insight into the functions of voluntary organizations serving the community. If, under other circumstances, I had lived in Constantine and held a job not involved with this research project, it is likely that I would have been involved in most of these organizations. I did not join them merely as a means to gain access to data; I enjoyed the associations and many of the activities apart from that responsibility.

Linda and I did not have children, but we had many acquaintances of our age who had young children and we enjoyed friendships with child-rearing families as well as those who were, like us, childless. To be childless did not limit the research. We were not closed off from social groups, and I was accepted at Parent-Teacher Association meetings without question.

We had friends in all age groups. I had a wide acquaintanceship with high school youth who recognized me as autonomous from the school system and its authority structure. I was often a sounding board for complaints. Several times, students asked me to run for election to the school board. Each time I explained that the nature of my research relationship would not permit such an adventure. I spent time talking with youth in school and away from school; frequently, students and former students would come to my home to talk. I accompanied groups of students and teachers on several project-sponsored excursions, and occasionally served as a substitute school bus driver or chaperone for extra-curricular events. For two years, Linda accompanied the high school French class on a week-long trip to Quebec, Canada. I was asked by several teachers to participate in classroom activities, including lecturing to a sociology class and assisting with a media production. With such a wide variety of activities, I came to know many students and developed genuine friendships with some.

I also enjoyed good friendships with teachers, administrators, and school board members. Linda and I were invited to many parties and other social functions held by members of these groups. We accepted many of the invitations, but attempted to avoid being identified as part of either the board, administrator, or teacher social groups, by also developing numerous friendships with people who were not members of those groups. Whenever Linda and I hosted a party, we invited friends from various social groups, including school personnel and those not connected with the schools.

Some members of the community concerned about social ranking expressed curiosity or dismay that I would patronize both the saloons in

Constantine. One saloon, the Nip 'n' Sip, was known to serve the working class; members of the community's upper strata never entered the premises. I was never told directly that a person of my "stature" in the community should avoid such places, yet I was informed that teachers and other professional people just did not go into such places. I was never discriminated against for violating such an unwritten code, because I indicated by word and deed that I did not feel restricted by such a standard, which was ignored by other young adults in the community.

When Linda and I arrived in Constantine, I was clean-shaven, although I had worn a beard during the previous two years while a graduate student. My supervisors at Abt Associates and I had concluded that because of the close-cropped and clean-shaven appearance of the school personnel in Constantine, I should make my entrance into the community without beard.

Despite the image projected by the school personnel, long hair and beards were just as prevalent in Constantine as anywhere else in America in the 1970's. At the end of the first year, I decided to grow my beard again. Except for one period of several months in the spring of 1976, I wore the beard throughout the remainder of my stay. Most residents were indifferent or at least did not express any negative reaction to my beard. Many students and young adults of the community openly praised me for wearing it, mostly because they thought I was sympathetic with their views. A few of my older friends and acquaintances told me that I "looked nicer without it," but there was no lessening of friendliness between us. Those known to be sympathetic to the John Birch Society and other conservative views reflected no hostility, and I continued to enjoy pleasant relationships with several of them. The only openly negative reactions came from the superintendent and one principal and from several residents who told

me that anyone connected with the schools should maintain a "neat appearance."

My style of dress was variable and followed no pattern. Some days I wore a suit, or slacks and sport jacket or sweater; other days I wore jeans, boots, and a woolen shirt. But most days I wore slacks and an open-neck shirt. I dressed like many residents, preferring casual and comfortable clothes.

My recreation habits included outdoor activities: running, bicycling, canoeing, camping, cutting firewood, and walks with our dogs. Linda and I also restored antique furniture with which we furnished our home and kept a large garden, canning and freezing its produce. Linda was a member of the Constantine Women's Club and occasionally joined in activities of the Jaycettes and Rotary-Anns. We occasionally went to high school athletic events and chaperoned dances in the high school cafeteria. Most of my recreation time was taken up by activities within the school district or nearby. Linda had some involvements outside the community, but both of us were viewed by the residents as "community oriented."

When we had lived in the community for one and one-half years, we purchased a commercial building located in the block-long business district. The building was being vacated and in need of repair. In our spare time, we made repairs and located tenants to occupy the building. There was no negative reaction from long-time residents to this activity; no concern that outsiders might be taking over. The commercial buildings of Constantine have had a long history of frequent turnover of ownership and the primary concern of downtown merchants was that there be no vacant properties. We were judged to have made a shrewd investment and to have contributed to local efforts to keep the business district viable. Prior to this time, I had rented an office

from the village government, but moved to a spare room in the rear of our building, where I kept my office until we departed two years later.

One final activity indicated the extent to which Linda and I became part of the community and not merely visitors. In spring 1976, I was approached by a leading Democratic Party member and the Chairman of the St. Joseph County Democratic Party, who asked me to become the candidate from this district for the state legislature. Although tempted, after considerable thought about the complications of campaigning, my current role as the researcher for this project, and my future life-choices, I decided not to become a candidate.

We left Constantine in August 1976 when research assignments for Abt were completed. We sold our home and the commercial building and said farewell to many friends. We had become part of this community, rather than merely students of its structure and culture; in leaving, we knew that our lives had been changed by the experience.

I returned to Constantine for one week in May 1977 to examine the school system at the time when federal funds for the ES project were ending and decisions were being made about the future of its components. I met with teachers, administrators, and board members as well as students, and other residents. It was a week of intensive observation and interviews which produced important findings about the last year and the conclusion of the project. My return to the schools and community was met with a warm and generous reception. I found no reluctance to provide me with the information I sought, almost as if I had not been away for the past nine months.

DATA ORGANIZATION AND ANALYSIS

As a participant observer, I lived in the midst of my research situation and was constantly surrounded by evidence of the social facts I sought. I accumulated vast amounts of information which was to be systematically recorded and stored, and devised a system which permitted categorization and retrieval of selected segments when necessary. This system was flexible enough to permit constant additions, even modifying, eliminating, or adding entire categories.

What follows is a description of the methods I used to organize my data and set up a system of analysis. It includes a description of the initial period, when much data was being collected and early categorization began; a later period, when data collection continued but with a refining of categories and the writing of short sketches to describe events, persons, and social conditions; the coding process; and the writing of draft chapters.

In beginning this research, I made the decision that the results would be determined by the facts as I saw them. I did not formulate a theoretical framework; only a set of research questions. The focus was a set of general propositions about the nature of change in a school organization which was supported by a general concept of the relationship of the small community (and its school system) to the outside world. Conflict was viewed as a normal part of organizational processes. I believed that the autonomy of the small community would be tested by the introduction of the Experimental Schools project, but that the program would be only one of the many continuous influences from outside the community. In this qualitative study, I imposed a minimal amount of

organizing structure. My methods of data gathering, including observation and unstructured interviews, were determined by this approach, as were my methods for coding and analyzing the data. The role of the participant observer and the methods used are intertwined; there is a continual mixing of recorded data with the interpretations the observer build by day-to-day living with the subjects.

Data Collection and Organization

Beginning in January 1973, I spent the initial months becoming acquainted with the school system and the rhythm of the community. At that time, school personnel were involved with planning the project, an unusual event in the life of the school system. In the community, it was "business as usual." I spent a large part of my time researching and writing a historical sketch of the school district from its earliest beginnings to the initial contacts with the Experimental Schools program, which helped to establish contacts and give definition to my role. Involvement with other research activities assigned by Abt Associages was to occupy a major proportion of my time. Observation and interviewing were part-time activities, fitted into a schedule of tasks assigned by Abt's home office staff.

My data collection tended to be unstructured, as I attempted to observe the daily flow of activity without imposing any framework. Early interviews reflected this approach, as I allowed the direction to be partly determined by the respondents' interests and current events. But most of my work for this study involved observation in those early months.

When I had been in the field for several months, I made an effort to assess my directions and progress. Until that time I had maintained my field notes in journal format (filed by time sequence). I had also

developed a file system for local news items, communications between the schools and outside agencies, school-produced pamphlets and bulletins, meeting agenda, and other written materials. No effort was made to limit categories or to impose categories used by other researchers. At this point, I spent several days reading my journal notes and examining my filing system. Most important in this review was to determine what I found in the data. What events appeared? What regularities of behavior had I observed, by plan or by accident? I tried to develop categories out of this review, categories for data I already had, as well as for data still to be collected. The purpose was to begin formulating a first framework of the total research picture.

While refining my categorization of subjects, I also used this time to speculate about the utility of sociological and anthropological concepts. For example, to what extent do interactions of the school district with outside agencies constitute vertical integration? What political elements are involved in resisting changed in the school system?

Observations and interviews continued through the remainder of 1973, all of 1974 and 1975, until August 1976, and then in May 1977. At several points, I reviewed my notes and file system. In the autumn of 1974, I conducted a substantial review and reclassified the data. At that time, I began a preliminary coding of field notes to get a better grasp of the large amount of data.

This preliminary analysis was an attempt to refine the research process. I needed to identify data which would be used in the primary focus of the study, and to discontinue research on those areas which were no longer considered relevant. This preliminary analysis was followed by a more complete review in 1977 prior to the final writing.

Validity and Reliability of the Data

The exigencies of the research situation prevented the data from being gathered in a standardized form which could be transformed into statistical data. Conclusions were developed from disparate distinctions between groups, rather than on precise quantification, and were based (as in quantitative analysis generally) on the likelihood that the differences were significant. The kind of evidence varied considerably and the confidence in the resulting conclusions also varied accordingly. Nevertheless, the validity and reliability of the data were evaluated and judged to be representative through repetitive interviewing and comparison techniques.

When a researcher sets out to test hypothesized behavior, validity presents a serious problem which exists only to a lesser degree when the researcher makes direct behavioral observations (Deutscher, 1967). In the latter case, it may be presumed that the researcher observed what he intended to observe, although it is less certain how accurately he observed it. Replication is the foremost method for determining reliability under such conditions. However, in this study, replication was not practicable. Replication is not a superior method of verification, since a later study does not necessarily validate or invalidate the earlier one. It is also possible that when the results of two independent studies disagree, neither is valid or reliable.

Repeated interviewing and comparison supplemented the basic method of participant observation in which the data collection was primarily managed through maintenance of a daily journal of events and of relatively casual, informal continuous interviews. Both of these

techniques were compiled in the field notes. To supplement this method, informant interviewing was regularly conducted wherein the informant reported information about presumed factual events and persons other than himself after the event had occurred. When an informant was interviewed during an event, it was considered part of the participant observation, rather than formal interviewing. Through comparison of repeated observations and confirmation of refutation of those observations through formal interviews, the response-validity of the study was established. This is not a claim that the data validity is equivalent to "real" or "actual" situations. Rather, it is a claim that the observations of the researcher were compared and matched with those of many repeated observations, as well as those of informants. When those observations were congruent, validity was assumed (see also Zelditch, 1962).

Writing Draft Chapters

My preliminary writing consisted of several short sketches and two formal working papers submitted to Abt Associates for transmission to ES/Washington. The short sketches were initial attempts to describe a particular event or an important character in the study. They were statements on a single topic or concept and were intended to clarify an idea I had been mentally tossing around for some time. I used them to commit an idea to paper. Later, I decided if they were correct or faulty in analysis. Some were records of a serendipitous idea which later proved useful. Some of these short sketches were conceived while recording field notes and were incorporated in the journal. Others were written during reviews of my notes. These were filed separately in my files. In both instances, they were saved until they could be reviewed for possible inclusion in later writing.

Finally, when all the data were collected, I reviewed the data, my short sketches, and the working papers. A decision was then made about any changes. There is a time when field work must cease and the decision is made to work on the final form of the report. As field work ends, writing increases. The data must be reviewed and last changes in the coding made. Then the sketches and part of the working papers which still appear viable are saved.

Out of this process, I hope I have produced a useful and valid report of the years of the project in Constantine. Colleagues have been asked to review the entire document, to counsel and criticize. Residents of the community have been asked to read portions or the entire manuscript. Earlier, I had asked residents to read drafts of papers previously prepared, and found this helpful. It is especially important to know whether what I write has validity in the eyes of those who live and work in the community.

APPLYING THE METHOD TO THE PROBLEM

This study was planned to examine the context of social change within a rural school district. The study plan included, as research objectives, the school district's Experimental Schools project, organizational change, and the community context within which the planned and unplanned changes were to take place. There are many factors which contribute to social change or restrict its occurrence, and the study was planned to focus on those factors as the change process was taking place. The intent was to study the changes as they occurred, to observe the change process, the individuals involved in the process, and the deviations and obstructions which occurred. The method

of participant observation was chosen, supported by interviewing, as the primary research method.

Participant observation was especially suited to this study because it permitted me, as the observer, to gain information on the problem while it was current and relevant. Other methods, including interviewing and surveys, demand an estimate of a hypothetical situation (even though it once was real), and force the respondent to think abstractly about a situation which is no longer currently relevant. The project took place over a period of five years--too long a period for recall to be effective as a primary method of data collection.

A second advantage of participant observation is that the method allowed access to those kinds of data which were guarded more closely, and hence not likely to be obtained by direct questioning (Kluckhohn, 1940:38). Other, unobtrusive methods (Webb, et al., 1966) produced information which those involved in the change process were not willing to divulge. As a participant in the community, I was more likely to be able to observe and record non-public behaviors by knowing which events were defined as public or private, and by eventually gaining the confidence of the group to witness secret forms of behavior. Because planned change was to take place, the primary change agents were reluctant to reveal strategies or expose manipulations which might not be considered acceptable by the residents, clients, or others interested in the process (Becker and Meyers, 1975). Where there was disagreement about the planned goals or conflict over competing group interests, outsiders were not permitted to witness such events. To be allowed to witness such behavior required acceptance of me, the observer, as a "person" with legit-

imate or permissible access to such events. Other times, I was viewed as not threatening to the individuals involved.

This study was planned to gain an understanding of the inner workings of the change process; to observe the intimate behaviors of the individuals and groups as they went about the daily process of working within an organizational context and attempted to produce results from planned innovations to the school system. Change is viewed as an ubiquitous process, even where it occurs as a result of a planned effort, and requires study which provides completeness of data. Moreover, since conflict is viewed as essential to group life, a presumption of the study plan was that not all forms of behavior would be available to a researcher who was widely recognized as an outsider. Consequently, the research role of the resident participant observer was believed to offer the best alternative to gain access to private forms of behavior, as well as in the interest of providing the most complete study of group processes.

APPENDIX NOTE

1. My personal observations led me to believe that Constantine was neither more nor less likely than any similar community to reflect the forms of behavior for which the novel Peyton Place is famous.